

LITURGICAL ARTS

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Editorials

IN THOSE early days of 1927, when the founders and friends of the Liturgical Arts Society were discussing ways and means to stay the artistic chaos in many of our churches, few hoped for the possibility of having a publication that might adequately project our ideas. For a time we felt that the best way to begin operations was through a group of experts in various fields of liturgical art, such a group to serve as an information committee for the guidance of all interested in the movement. One of the chief members of this initial group was Father Virgil Michel O.S.B., of Saint John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minnesota. Subsequent events led us beyond the activities of this group, but we have retained the help and guidance of nearly all those who were then willing to steer the course of the infant organization.

Thanks to Father Paul Marx O.S.B., we are now privileged to publish in this issue excerpts from a chapter of his forthcoming thesis on the life of Dom Virgil. Our early friend's vision in matters of liturgical art and other related questions was evident to those who had the opportunity to enjoy his conversation. And he was truly a pioneer. At a meeting of the Society in 1934, he remarked: "In the field of art, too, new inspiration is needed. After the gothic of medieval faith, we have had little more than the classical renaissance with its rather too unjoyous dignity and baroque with its playfulness gone wild, ending often in uncontrolled frivolity. After that there has been almost nothing beyond an attempt to recapture a past that no longer lives today."

BUT remnants of that past still linger and we now have Mr Henry Hope Reed's nostalgic call to what he whimsically terms as "New Architecture." In attacking certain aberrations of some present architecture Mr Reed pours the acid of irony on the shadow of the "modernist," whose major difficulty is that he has to live in the maelstrom of life today. Much of what Mr Reed has to say is echoed by those "modernists" he so cheerfully castigates, but we doubt that his remedy can cure present ills. While it is possible to cure a skin disease (and that is what we are suffering from nowadays in the architectural field) the cure must be worked on a living tissue, and not on the corpse of fantasy of past dreams.

At any rate we emphatically repudiate a system which would make of art, particularly art in the service of the Church, a reflex of dead styles. For the sake of the record, however, we felt that Mr Reed's point of view should be given a hearing. The visual evidence of his artistic cogitations can be seen on page 62 — a design for a church located on a lower Park Avenue corner and in architectural sympathy with the Grand Central Terminal. Whether this bit of Venetian exuberance is any better than other creations of the recent past can be left to the reader to decide.

While Mr Reed sees salvation for the admitted sterility in much of today's architecture in a look backward and a return to stage scenery Mr John Knox Shear, in his text "Toward a Whole Architecture," seeks a solution in the stream of time. He remarks: "Those who would create a *whole* architecture for *whole* people must have curiosity

first of all, and this cannot happen to those who close their eyes and ears, who end their search for truth in some architectural god of their youth, whether that god be a man or an exclusive idea. In any event, we cannot surrender ourselves to the dead hand of nostalgic archeology." We heartily agree with Mr Shear's evaluations of the problems as they face us today.

IN HIS review of Wladimir Weidlé's book, *Les Abeilles d'Aristée*, Mr Reed calls this author to the rescue but this is possible only by carefully avoiding some of Weidlé's remarks. For example: "A style does not invent itself, nor does it reproduce itself; it cannot be fabricated, it cannot be imposed by force or through any ruse, nor can it be chosen as a ready-made system, adaptable to any historical period; in attempting to imitate a style we only falsify it, we merely substitute an artificial style" (page 141). On page 148 Weidlé pokes fun at the reproductions of greek, byzantine, gothic which dot some of our cities. He calls them travesties of those old styles. Further, we have this comment: "And so, according to Le Corbusier himself, the principles of a purely rational construction do not yet constitute a style, but only the necessary condition and, so he believes, the conditions necessary to its birth" (page 153).

On religious art, Weidlé has this to say. "This renewal begins with architecture. . . . Once the religious edifice sheds its antique trappings, the embellishments of past glories, we can then express a hope that never will the old forms and the inexpressive images be

tolerated in the neighborhood of the altar" (page 323). Amen!

JEAN CHARLOT contributes a commentary on the artistic portions of Father O'Connell's book on *Church Building and Furnishing*. As usual, his remarks are to the point. He demolishes the fulminations of the pseudo-traditionalists who seek refuge in certain portions of papal texts while avoiding other sections which attack the cheap tinsel which disfigures many a church. And to round out a tantalizing issue

we have Father Edward J. Sutfin's comments on the article on "Stations of the Cross," which appeared in our February number.

The illustrative portion is, in a way, an architectural sandwich. The center spread is devoted to the new monastic wing at Saint John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minnesota—the first unit in a major operation under the guidance of the well-known architect Marcel Breuer. We hope the authorities will soon find it possible to proceed with plans for the new abbey church. The first page

of this section illustrates a remarkable job of "surgical art" in the cathedral of Kansas City, Missouri, by Miss Charlton Fortune. Rather than keep any tinsel and trappings Miss Fortune has produced a major work of restoration which depends for its effectiveness, in color and on the majesty of her large sanctuary mosaic. We mourn our inability to reproduce this interior in full color. The fourth page illustrates the stirring of that *new* architecture in the light of Mr Reed's thesis and Mr Bailey's retrospection.

Liturgy and Culture *

THE REVEREND PAUL MARX, O.S.B.

AMIDST researching, writing, lecturing, and traveling, a constant cross-fertilization of ideas went on in the mind of Father Virgil Michel.† There was also progression in his thinking. That progression led in the last years of his life to the profound conviction that the essential task before American Catholics, and before the liturgical apostolate in particular, was the building up of a Catholic culture under the indispensable inspiration of the liturgy totally lived. This was the end-development of his socio-liturgical thought. Almost from the first years of the 1920's he had warned that a corroding secularism was militantly on the march. In 1926, in the foreword to *Orate Fratres*, he wrote that "many and varied interests meet in the liturgy. The latter is a great mine of the widest cultural life." Now, in the chaotic days of the depression thirties and, as he said, "at the end of an era in the history of the world," it became his "overwhelming conviction" that the liturgy

"... is the one true basis of Christian culture and civilization. The liturgy, understood and lived after the mind of Christ and His Church—therefore lived both individually and socially—cannot but flower out into a genuine Christian culture that embraces every aspect of human life and experience. This is a most important truth for our day, when the Holy Father calls for a Christian reconstruction of the social order, when we are living in a world torn by a struggle of culture, and when we are

a minority group in a pagan, materialistic, and naturalistic culture and civilization, much as were the early Christians, but without possessing their solidarity and their perfect charity, and apparently without their wholehearted devotion and zeal for the things of Christ. . . . Our task is similar to that of the early Christians, and our implements and tools are identical with theirs."

So convinced was he of the crying need for a revival of Catholic culture in a morally bankrupt, pagan civilization and secular humanism that he stated, "unless there is a Christian cultural revival, Christian dominion of the world will yield more and more to the neopagan, mayhap even till but a small band of faithful remains to go through

the fructifying experience of another catacomb existence." A week of observations and discussions in Mexico only convinced him the more of what a bulwark a Christian culture can be for the Faith, and how in the United States such a sense of Catholic tradition and culture in daily life and environment were lacking, because of its historical antecedents and for other reasons.

With the distinct aim of providing a revival of Christian culture Dom Virgil in the 1930's made a thorough study of what a Catholic culture might be, guided the liturgical apostolate, and edited *Orate Fratres* (now *Worship*). The latter then became an organ for the furtherance of a Christian cultural revival.

In forming a concept of Catholic culture one must know first of all the true nature of culture as such. In 1935, upon investigation in standard sources, Michel met one of the surprises of his life. He was "dumbfounded" to find nothing suitable or in any way adequate for his purpose. The *Catholic Encyclopedia*, for instance, had nothing. Almost in desperation he wrote to Frederick Kenkel, his friend and the head of the Central Verein, for a book or treatise giving a "fundamental exposition of a philosophical analysis of the thing we call culture." Kenkel answered, "I cannot at the present moment remember a book or brochure on culture which

* Being excerpts from a chapter in the forthcoming thesis by Father Paul Marx, O.S.B., on the life of Dom Virgil Michel, O.S.B. It will be published in book form by the Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota, sometime in 1956.

† Dom Virgil Michel, O.S.B., monk of Saint John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minnesota, was born in Saint Paul, June 26, 1890, and died November 26, 1938. He was educated in Saint Paul, at Saint John's, the Catholic University of America and Columbia University. He also attended Saint Anselm's College in Rome, and the University of Louvain, Belgium. As founding editor of *Orate Fratres* (now *Worship*) in 1926, Dom Virgil organized the liturgical movement in the United States and was instrumental in establishing the Liturgical Press. As a philosopher and educator, he wrote on a great variety of subjects.

would meet your requirements. It is a most difficult term to define, and used rather indiscriminately, very much as social justice is." Michel had also asked Kenkel to collaborate with him for a book on Catholic culture. That book, by the way, remains to be written. This writer knows of nothing by an American Catholic that approaches such a book more closely than Michel's unpublished manuscript, "Liturgy and Catholic Life," which he meant as a sequel to his *Liturgy of the Church*. That Father Virgil should have so early hit upon the anthropological concept of culture as an integral, comprehensive, organized whole or as a total way of life is only one more indication of his alert mind.

OF COURSE, elements of Christian culture have persisted to our times. Nor is every element of contemporary culture "bad or un-Christian." Rather it's the dominating spirit that is so. To long nostalgically for a literal return to some past Christian age is folly. In the turbulent thirties it was not infrequently suggested that sincere Catholics should isolate themselves from the wicked world so as to be able to live a truly Christian life and thus to give more effective witness to the truth to a Christless world. "One of the greatest needs of our day," Michel believed, "is wholehearted Christians who remain in the world, but not of the world, doing good for Christ wherever possible." To run away from the neo-pagan world is admission of defeat, cowardice, and betrayal of Christian duty; it would amount to abandoning the world to anti-Christ, failing to keep the papal pleas for Catholic action, forgetting that confirmation makes each Catholic personally responsible for the social and cultural environment in which the Church carries out her mission. Nor is it sufficient, he thought, to be negatively wholehearted in keeping oneself unstained from the worldliness of a neo-pagan civilization. "The Christian," Dom Virgil contended in 1937, "can be a wholehearted apostle of Christ only if he also works positively at the Christianizing of his pagan environment and at the ever greater growth and spread of the kingdom of God here on earth. The call to Catholic action in our century is a God-given indication that no Christian life is adequate unless it strives wholeheartedly to exercise this apostolate."

The work at hand, then, is to imbue our culture and civilization with a renewed Christian spirit, "the age-old

inspiring and unifying spirit of Christian love." Right here the Catholic's task begins.

However, if the Christian is to fulfill his vocation of being another Christ and of living ever to restore all things to Christ, he must understand the cultural environment in which he is living. Above all he must realize that a culture, since it is the result of human thinking, acting, and associating together, can, like men, be for or against Christ — and ours is decidedly against Him, Dom Virgil often showed. Therefore, we must not only become apostle-conscious, he exhorted, but also *culture-conscious*. This the average Catholic has not been. In fact, most Catholics have lived their religion "very privately"; they have "lived a culture and lived in a culture foreign to the true Christian spirit"; worse than that, very many have taken this almost for granted as a normal state of affairs. And if Catholics have in this life no lasting city, but actually feel at home in a "ubiquitous atmosphere," then it is not too much to say, he thought, that in many ways not a few have been contaminated, have consciously or unconsciously compromised often, have contributed to the reasons why the Church has been ineffective and exerted so little influence on the temporal order. How can the Church exert such an influence except through the individual Catholic at the scene of action? Yet, as Michel wrote in 1935, the Christian living the liturgical life must daily strive to effect "the penetration of all human contacts and activities with the spirit of Christ." Only in this way can be gradually restored what Dawson called "the liturgical character of popular culture" destroyed by the reformation.

As a matter of fact, so intertwined with his culture and environment is the Catholic's life that he either christianizes the pagan environment surrounding him by instilling into it his Christian spirit, or else the pagan environment will paganize him at least to some degree.

In connection with this, increasingly more is heard these days about a "lay spirituality." In so far as the latter is the spirituality of the Church rightly understood in terms of the layman, most of Michel's liturgical writings dealt with it. But he made a specific reference to it as early as 1936. Different ages and times, he said, call forth different types or ideals of sanctity. Thus there was the martyr-saint in early Christianity; in the

middle ages more than one person abandoned the world to seek holiness. "Our own ideal and that of our immediate future," Michel remarked, "will perhaps be one in which the saintly life will be lived, not in fleeing the world but in showing the world how the daily routine and concerns of life — the whole natural order — can be raised into the supernatural and sanctified." Certainly this type of sanctity is more sorely needed in our day. He added: "It could very properly be called the liturgical type, since the liturgy is the indispensable source of the Christian spirit for all men, and since its inspiration reaches so completely into all the angles and aspects of daily active life in the world."

IN REGARD to culture the Church is truly catholic; as the heir and mother of universal culture, she despises no goods of earth or body and welcomes all true human progress; nothing human is foreign to her. Committed to no particular culture, she is supra-cultural and supra-national as she is supernatural. Precisely because the Church is a living organism overflowing with the life and spirit of Christ, she gathers into herself and assimilates whatever she finds of value; from every culture of every age she draws something, and so adds to her total being. To realize her life fully, her spirit must pervade the whole culture, since the latter is always an integral whole.

A true Catholic culture, Father Virgil explained, "would include the sound concepts and traditions of all times, the best developments of human progress of all ages, and that in all fields of human interest and endeavor, theological, philosophical, historical, social, political, economic, literary, artistic, ethical. It would be truly Catholic in its scope and thus realize the ardent desire of Pius X that the true Christian spirit flourish again in every manner and that Christ be formed in all."

Such a Christian culture the Church strives to fashion through the continuous realization of the redemption that is the liturgy. Through the Mass she endeavors to color, refresh, and integrate the whole of man's life, and in her prayers she sanctifies every hour. Through the sacramentals the Church accompanies the Christian in life, forms a suitable environment, frees material creation from the curse of Satan so as to praise God freely; she blesses space and time, persons and things, and lest anything be overlooked, she has a blessing *ad omnia*.

Thus the Church breathes the spirit of Christ into all details of modern life.

CERTAINLY part of a Christian cultural revival will be the re-flourishing of the arts. Mention has been made of Michel's relations with artists, with the Liturgical Arts Society, and of his efforts in the pioneer days of the 1920's to promote a revival of the sacred arts through *Orate Fratres* and in other ways. From the first days of the organized liturgical movement in 1926, he observed that a liturgical revival will certainly bring also an artistic revival. For just as the liturgy is a synthesis of all theology and scripture, so it is the integrating or synthesis of all the arts in the worship of God: architecture, sculpture, painting, music, poetry. But while the Church employs all creation from man down, as well as the highest achievements of human art and skill, in giving glory to the God of all beauty and goodness, the liturgy in its very nature is the supreme expression of living art. To know, to love, to live the liturgical life is to become interested in the arts. A renewed and sympathetic understanding and appreciation of the liturgy, therefore, necessarily leads to a revival of sacred art.

So closely is art tied in with religion, Michel contended, that it will always go the way of religion. Also, the art of any age reflects its temper, tastes, values. That is why, he said, the art in his day in general bore the marks of mechanical externality, of empty naturalism, of mawkish sentimentalism, of modern pessimism; it is individualistic, subjective, esoteric; it is anything but vital and living.

Works of art, furthermore, speak of what men worship, and objects of worship can be material or spiritual. The undeniably sad condition of Christian art, especially of ecclesiastical art, is but one more example, he noted, of the inroads into Christian life that the pagan temper of the times has made, in place of the penetration and permeation of the environment of Christian ideals. And certainly the esthetic education and appreciation of American Catholics left much to be desired, to say the least. Here also the liturgical movement could play an important part in restoring art to its rightful place in human life, above all in the spiritual life.

"In the fields of art, too, new inspiration is needed," he told a meeting of the Liturgical Arts Society in 1934. He continued: "After the gothic art of medieval faith, we have had little more than the

classical renaissance with its rather too unjoyous dignity and baroque with its playfulness gone wild, ending often in uncontrolled frivolity. After that there has been almost nothing beyond an attempt to recapture a past that no longer lives today."

WHAT is the nature and purpose of liturgical art? And how does it differ, if at all, from sacred or religious art in general? One must summarize briefly. Since the liturgy is the external embodiment of interior soul and divine spirit and in the sacramental mysteries the actual depository of the divine, art finds in the liturgy its most natural sphere. But even considered from the human standpoint, the liturgy is a great work of art. The whole liturgy, like its every ceremony, is an integral unit exhibiting the selectiveness of art in view of achieving a given end. It takes on the character of profound art not just by its externals but in the special way that these embody or express or call forth the full depth of human sentiment and aspiration, for in the liturgy goodness and beauty if sought, end man's profoundest quest. If the liturgy is full of God's love for man, so does it also enshrine man's deepest thoughts and feelings toward the Creator. In the liturgy nature is not suppressed or distorted; nor is it given an artificial interpretation; the symbols employed reflect the God-given and natural purpose of the materials used. And these materials are given their most beautiful and meaningful forms in the worship of God.

In many other ways does the liturgy of the Church embody to the highest degree the characteristics common to all true art. There are organic structure, progressive development, organized around a focal idea or ideal, integration of gesture, postures, words, music, color, etc. — all selected and blended to produce a unified effect. If sincerity and honesty are required of the worshipper's inner participation, the liturgy demands the same no less in the choice of materials, down to the least item. Precisely because the liturgy is the "supreme expression of the spirit of art," Dom Virgil showed, "nothing is farther from the mind of the liturgy than haphazard action, cheap or gaudy display, falsity or sham of any kind." Modern secular art, feeding as it must on a spiritually bankrupt civilization, is often depressively pessimistic. Not so liturgical art, which, like the liturgy, is always eminently optimistic; it always

reflects the joyous victory of the glorified Christ even while it teaches mortification and death to self during Lent. Furthermore, liturgical art is as social as the liturgy; it is not the esoteric preserve or snobbish hobby of a select few, but the property of all members of Christ; it is catholic, universal in its appeal, communal in its appreciation. "Who knows," Michel asked, "but that the liturgical revival, in regaining this character for its art, may not also be the inspiration for a return to a more social art in general, and so help over the abundant facilities and great emptiness of so much of our subjectivistic and individualistic art."

BUT not every kind of art or artistic inspiration makes for a happy marriage between liturgy and art. About this Dom Virgil was most emphatic. Always must art serve the liturgy as tool and means; never must the liturgy be adjusted to the whims and ways or even the inspirations of individual artists and their creations. Not all religious art or sacred art is necessarily liturgical. Organic, not accidental or artificial, is the union between art and the liturgy. For art to be truly liturgical, then, it must be an integral but subordinate element of the liturgy, and, furthermore, it must be entirely inspired by the ideas and ideals of the liturgy.

But the most important observations about the liturgy and art remain to be stated. Liturgical art must be understood in two ways: liturgical art by inspiration and purpose, and liturgical art in action. All art is the external and sensible manifestation of what is essentially supra-sensible. Now the art symbols of the liturgy indicate an inner spiritual reality; but the sacramental signs of the liturgy actually effect what they signify. The liturgy at its best may therefore be called, Virgil Michel stressed, "the supreme living art, in which both the human and the divine are operative together, in which the divine is present in human form and takes an increasing stature in the person who lives and acts in it as a true member of Christ. What is thus presented by analogy in all the art-forms that are in the service of the liturgy, becomes supreme realization in the liturgical enactment itself. And both the priest and faithful who participate actively in the liturgical mystery, thus become supreme living artists in proportion to the perfection with which their external words, gestures, and postures reveal and enact

the inner divine reality that is the essential nature of liturgical worship."

THE liturgy in action, then, is living art of the highest possible kind. So much having been said, the role of the arts in the liturgy can be briefly stated. Since liturgical art subserves the liturgy, it has the same purpose as the liturgy, namely, the glorification of God and the sanctification of man. Negatively, it must in no way call attention to itself and so distract the faithful from the divine saving action going on. Positively, it must make liturgical worship more intelligible to all the faithful, inspire, prepare them for, and facilitate their active and collective participation, as well as give them the right attitude to the church as the House of God; a properly adorned

church lifts them above themselves and their daily routine to God, not by a "momentary hypnotism of atmosphere," but by speaking to them positively and concretely of the great truths underlying their worship which give proper direction to art.

Because art as the handmaid of the liturgy performs a mediatorial service, the liturgical artist engages in a sacerdotal function. Since his artistic creations must serve the purposes of the liturgy, the artist mediates by way of preparing the worshippers for Christ's operation in the sacred action. This the artist does not do so much by "conscious design"; the hieratic quality of his art results rather from "a spontaneous inspiration out of the depths of the artist." Therefore, even much more than the ordinary

Christian, he must live and produce for God. Yet, all art is self-revelation to some degree: it is a kind of confession; the artist cannot but put his personality into his work, if he is to remain an artist; even liturgical art, then, will reflect the artist. But just because his work must glorify God but will nevertheless reflect his personality, Dom Virgil explained, the liturgical artist must be "genuinely another Christ in the innermost depths of his heart. He must live the liturgy at the altar as well as in his daily life; in his every thought and action he must exercise the priesthood of Christ he shares in through the sacraments of baptism and confirmation. Only then will he live and breathe Christ; only then will his art perform the priestly function that is its highest privilege."

Toward a New Architecture?

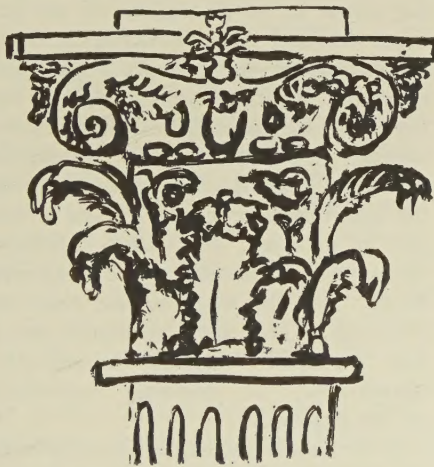
HENRY HOPE REED JR.*

FOR a generation now the virtues of the "Modern" in architecture have been proclaimed. Patiently the ventures have been abetted and watched, patiently the promised rewards awaited. We closed our eyes to ugliness and spurred on the attempts in the hope that beauty would come at last. Instead, we find ourselves surrounded by a brutality which eclipses the earlier ugliness.

It is time that the plague of the modern be defined for what it is. It is time that modern architecture be unmasked as the latest form of Picturesque Secessionism.† It is time that we wake up and discover our classical tradition. It is time that we consider the architecture which will succeed the modern of today, the new architecture for the future.

What is it that drives the "Modernist" to indulge in ugliness? First and foremost, he is an eternal rebel. He is forever trying to shock. He stripped ornament off buildings thirty years ago and enjoyed the astonishment, anger and confusion that ensued. But stripping a building of ornament was only a start. Instead of placing columns on a building, the modernist placed the building

on columns, a trick of Le Corbusier. The simple cottage by the waterfall has been replaced by the elephantine bun-

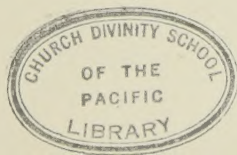


galow on top of the waterfall, sleight-of-hand by Frank Lloyd Wright. The tricks wear out soon enough, but they are replaced by others, just as the all-glass building is now being pushed aside by the all-steel one.

Originality at all costs is the surest way to shock. In the old days if a building were useful and achieved beauty, the designer knew that originality would take care of itself. All strivings for originality, as other epochs understood it, led inevitably to the quaint and the monstrous. Now that the quaint and the monstrous are found useful in attaining shock, originality has replaced beauty as an aim. To be original the designer must forget the standards and monuments of the past and indulge in a form of esthetic vivisection much as a modern painter, when drawing a nude, carves it up for his own special satisfaction. To be absolutely new or original, no matter the result, is the crowning achievement. The hunger to be original is the strongest single driving force behind the modern plague.

If shock and originality have mesmerized the contemporary architect, a false notion of progress has blessed both. Progress in the arts is the great talisman

* Co-author with Christopher Tunnard of *American Skyline*, published by Houghton Mifflin in a hard cover edition. To be published in a Mentor paper back edition this July.
† Picturesque Secessionism, a child of the last century, is an architectural movement which has seceded from the classical tradition and turned to the picturesque effect, with heavy emphasis on the mechanics of construction and with originality as the esthetic goal. (See Henry Reed, "Viollet-le-Duc and the USA" *Liturgical Arts*, November, 1954.)



which has made us willing to accept the modern, no matter the consequences. As we Americans consider our way of life in large part the result of economic, social and scientific progress, we have welcomed the modern as a sign of the forward look. We have willingly accepted the arrogant claim of the modernists that their work is of our time, as if all buildings built today were not of our time. According to their authorities the modern belongs to our era because it cannot be identified with a known style. They do not know that their own picturesque secessionism is a hundred years old and stems from Eugène Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc (1814-1879), but any influence of the past they declare "imitation." What results is inevitable. Under the banner of progress and of an art of our time, the modernists proceed to imitate one another; "original" along such similar lines, they are blissfully unconscious of the wretched conformity and pedestrian materialism which they offer under the legend, "Living Design."

THE break with the past took place a generation ago, but the thought of it still gives youth to the modernist. He delights in kicking the chains of tradition which have been lying at his feet for years. A general subjectivism and anti-intellectualism are the reward. The modernists fear history, except that small portion of it which serves as an apology for their work. Set apart from the great sweep of the past, the modern architect looks on himself as a "creative artist." Like a saint among the New England Puritans he is predestinated for his heaven of originality and let anyone dare criticize him for not being creative. After all, with the past destroyed so far as he is concerned, he is free to discover the pure genius which he conceals within himself.

Although some have unkindly maintained that he has found his genius in contemplating his navel, it would be fairer to say that he has found it in contemplating construction, plan and materials with what amounts to nos-

talgia. When the architect threw over the classical and other historical styles which are commonly called traditional and resorted to shock and originality in the name of progress, he lost such useful tools as ornament, symmetry, order and the human form. All that was left him were construction, plan and materials. Nothing daunted, he has



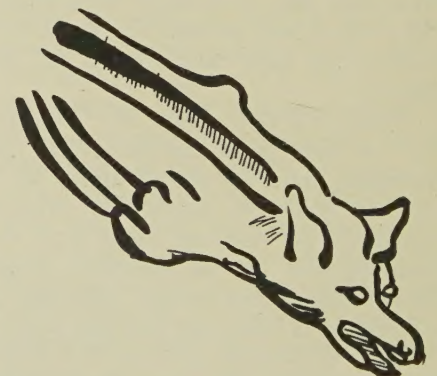
been happy confining his skill to this triad and he has endowed these three elements with special powers until today they partake of a mysticism all their own. Letting construction dictate the final design or, as it is often called, letting form follow function, the architect can achieve the much sought-for originality. Strip the design of the building down to its structure, try an unusual method of construction such as the cantilever, the triangular spherical structure, the concrete flat slab or the tetrahedral space slab and, lo, we have modern architecture. The modernist then apologizes quite unconsciously for the ugly result by telling us how he has put it together. New and expensive methods of construction are employed simply for the sake of the resulting originality. This kind of experimentation is called "organic," "rational," "pragmatic," or "natural," depending on the individual.

If the modernist cannot put his hand on the latest and most complicated method of construction, he suggests a difficult site. Placing a building on the side of a hill or over a waterfall forces structural *Sturm-und-Drang* upon him. Besides the complicated structural methods, he has the nature of the site to contend with, making the result even more "natural." The difficult site is one more self-imposed hurdle which the modernist seeks for its own sake.

Then there is the plan. "The plan is the generator" has been married to the idea of "form follows function." The pilgrim on the road to originality lets the plan dictate the design. At once a facade is done away with because it conceals the "nature" of the plan. Quite obviously a bizarre plan will produce an original design.

The third element in our mystical triad is the question of materials. Ornament excluded, material "in a state of nature" is offered as the happy alternative. A new material for the modernist is automatically modern, which accounts for the use of bare concrete. Stucco can be used on condition that there is no ornament applied, and the "nature" of the material therefore bruised. In existing structures it is considered bold to peel off the plaster to reveal the "natural" brick beneath. Several modernists have turned aside to employ old-fashioned materials such as marble, but as there is no molding or other carved ornament, the effect could be attained more cheaply and just as effectively by marbled wallpaper. Glass, of course, has proven the greatest joy of all. Although hardly a new material, it has been resurrected in such quantity that it is considered new. It eliminates ordinary walls, demands feats of construction, does away with privacy and is impossible to adorn, being presumably sufficient unto itself as adornment. With glass the mysticism of the material achieves its nadir, for what can be "purer" than glass which is almost like air?

IT IS hardly surprising that the modern building has little place for painting, sculpture, or any other decorative art. If a home owner persists in having a painting in his glass house, he is told to rest it on an easel as a painter would do. Were the client to change his mind and ask for any form of decoration, he would find no place for it;



the modern architect has successfully exiled the sister arts out of architecture. Those who seek proof need only compare a modern church to one in the classical or gothic tradition.

The mysticism which clothes construction, plan and materials gives modern architecture its peculiar straightlaced morality which can best be described as neo-puritanical and iconoclastic. The absence of any form of adornment only heightens the effect. This twisted morality, with its shroud of the utilitarian and the functional, has led architects to announce that the modern is good for us, and its antiseptic appearance too often makes us accept that verdict.

The modernist, of course, has a new vocabulary. When the styles of the past were tossed aside, the classical and gothic terminology had to follow. The modernist then devised his own and sought words chiefly in the bathroom, the kitchen and the laboratory.

Shock, originality, a false understanding of progress, limiting architecture to the barest necessities of construction, plan and materials, turning an art into a pseudo-science, disowning the past, making use of a self-conscious vocabulary, — such is modern architecture, a destructive negative force. Bound up in its own cant, embalmed in its own orthodoxy, smelling strongly of anti-septics and, above all, sowing destruction in the name of the absolutely new, it is nothing less than a form of mystic nihilism.

The alternative to this so-called modern, which has left us floundering in a latter-day version of nineteenth century nihilism, lie not in another form of picturesque secessionism, but in our classical tradition. The new architecture will begin where the American Renaissance left off a generation ago when its leaders, Cass Gilbert, Whitney Warren, Benjamin Wistar Morris, Thomas Hastings, Edwin Palmer York, Philip Sawyer and Charles Platt passed from the scene. (A few stalwarts still hold high the classical banner, not least William Adams Delano whose Post Office Department Building in Washington with its oval and major plazas forms one of the nation's best civic complexes.) Classical conceptions must be redefined, classical standards revived, and classical education given new life and, then with glory as the aim, we will have an art called architecture.

Let us begin with the most obvious failure of the modern, the complete

absence of visual pleasure. The new puritanism, brought on largely by the mysticism of materials, chased fancy from the temple and left it barren. The modern church makes us look again at what the French call "la bon-dieuserie de St. Sulpice" and wonder. After the vivisected and neo-primitive



works offered by the modern academy, the trite Virgins and saints of blue, white and gold plaster have a certain appeal. It is true that this popular art suffers from insipidity and that it can be dismissed as tinsel, but we must remember that tinsel was invented to gladden the eye.

It was God's will, when He made us, to give us certain qualities beyond the ordinary appetites and functions. One of these was the sense of pleasure, much as He offered us the blessing of sleep. The Almighty does not rest from His labors, but we mere mortals must have respite from the day's work and, so too, must we pursue our daily round with occasional delights, often silly, at times instructive, at times noble and even inspirational. There are many duties we would accept grudgingly were it not that they contained some element of pleasure. The pill has its sweet coat and the gesture is transformed by a smile. Today our architecture has abandoned pleasure; it smiles no longer because the smile is considered superfluous.

When pleasing passes from the ephemeral to the permanent, it takes on a new value which we term beauty. This is not the sparkling motor which we, in our enthusiasm, call beautiful, nor the skillfully wrapped package which charms us; it is an object where the hand of the artist is present, where its designer has gone beyond mere finish and achieved a quality that makes it

precious. This is the beauty which preserves all things made by man when their usefulness may have long since vanished.

ARCHITECTURE, as is well known, has three basic conditions: It must be useful, it must be structurally sound, and it must delight. The first two are answered daily, the third is a challenge. It is this last which sets a building and its architect apart from the common run. We have seen how we have fallen into the error of believing that, by meeting the first two conditions, we have met the third. If that were so, there would be no need for the artist in any form; yet this childish notion dominates our whole approach to good building. We have forgotten that great architecture includes the decoration of structure. Little wonder that in wandering about the modern city we find ourselves hungering for the visual pleasure which has been denied us.

We know that beauty lies beyond utility and mere pleasure; we know that it is a quality which gives permanence to everything man creates. Beauty takes on a positive value for its own sake, hence it has a moral value. The skill which aims at achieving the beautiful we call art, and the man who dares attempt it we call an artist. Contrary to the modernist art has a useful and practical function, over and above the minimum, because it satisfies a human need. By taking the useful and giving it the added virtue of beauty, the artist touches a chord in all of us, identifying us consciously or unconsciously to the community of man in the past, in the present and in the future. It is by the weapon of art that we attain visual order and harmony and, through them, repose.

Ornament is one of the essential "superfluities" which the modernist disdains. Its detail alone delights us and is endlessly rewarding. By means of ornament the other arts are allowed to join in the creation. The modernist exiled his fellow artists from the temple when he saw fit to abandon ornament. They will be invited to return, or rather they will insist on returning, bringing with them their many skills. Statues, pictures, volutes, masks, pilasters, iron work, gilding, etc. — all carefully placed for our pleasure by the architect and his artist-peers — make us rejoice that so many have thought of us. A building without ornament, said the philosopher, is like the heaven without stars.

If ornament delights for its own sake, it also serves the vital purpose of giving scale. Scale is the relation of dimensions between the elements of an architectural composition and between these elements and the whole. In fact, the search for scale prevents the meretricious use of ornament, for ornament serves to accent certain portions of a building and gives it shape. So-called modern architecture, having no ornament, has no scale. A modern building is like a gasometer which expands or contracts without conveying any sense of size or quality.

If ornament is held on the leash of scale, scale in turn must bow to the function of the building. All architects of the past worthy of the name have always recognized function, but they never let themselves be bound by its narrowest definition. Anything which adorns and pleases has a function, although that function may not be mechanical. In the favorite American church of Pius XII, the Cathedral of Saint Paul in Saint Paul by E. L. Masqueray, there is a baldachin by Whitney Warren (See illustration). Such an elaborate form of decoration is proscribed today because it is too superb, too costly, too closely tied to the past, too obviously contrary to the modern canons of our neo-puritanical age. Six columns of black and gold (Portora) marble with bronze corinthian capitals carry a cornice and a bronze canopy bearing the dove of the Holy Spirit and the Cross. Two heroic figures of adoring angels stand guard on the cornice. Whitney Warren had two main problems, one, to fit his conception into Masqueray's fabric and the other, to make it as sumptuous as possible without abusing the ornamentation and the design. He was wise enough to look to the best that the past had created, namely the baldachin of Saint Peter's in Rome, that of the Val de Grace in Paris and, no doubt, many others. In fact, he even wanted to employ Solomonic columns as in the Bernini baldachin, but his client kept him to straight ones. The size and height of it allowed him to make use of elaborate sculpture and rich materials which would have been far less effective had the cathedral been smaller.

The baldachin of Whitney Warren illustrates what the future can offer. It is a formal composition based on a definitive program, made of the richest materials, and consisting of a variety of detail with none of the detail left to chance. For all its elaborateness

Warren's design springs from the solid base of the classical point of view.

The design of a classical building first consists of a clear axial plan, where every room presents a single conception. In the modern all interiors are space-flow and the plan is picturesque. Secondly the facade is considered integral and necessary for its own sake. Without a facade a building is faceless. Third, the entrance to the building must be distinctly formal and pompous — a courtesy to those about to enter. The lobby too must be imposing — in fact, courtesy must rule throughout. Harmony and propriety must prevail because they bring beauty. "L'union établie en la distinction fait l'ordre," declared Saint François de Sales, "l'ordre produit la convenance et la proportion; et la convenance, ès choses entières et accomplies, fait la beauté."

THE new architecture will be founded on the study of the classical orders (doric, ionic, corinthian, composite and tuscan), which is the only way to gain a perception of proportion and relation of adjustment and scale, that sobriety, measure and discretion which are the essence of the classical approach. Beyond the study of the five orders a hierarchy will once again be accepted in the arts. A pencil sketch will not be equated with a large historical painting, nor a bungalow with a railroad station. A man willing to accept the challenge of having a place for all the arts in his building will automatically be honored above the man who excludes them. A successful joining of several buildings into a formal composition will rank above the design of a single building. To monumental architecture will go the first honors.

On page 62 is illustrated a scheme by John Barrington Bayley, *one of many possible solutions in classical terms*, and there are even solutions in gothic terms when not *archaeological* as in the instance of the Woolworth and *Chicago Tribune* Towers. If the design of John Bayley does not quite achieve its end, it is not because it is not traditional, rather it is not traditional enough. It errs in being original. At least he is working in the spirit of Whitney Warren and has achieved more than structural dialectics and neo-primitivism.

What then should a church be like? Let it begin by having facade as offered here, a "false front" of the American tradition, whose sole purpose is to declaim with pride: "Ad Majorem Dei

Gloriam." Invited to enter by its welcome, at once superb and courteous, we might find ourselves in an oval or nave above which will rise a high dome and cupola or a high vault. The altar will have an elaborate baldachin or a reredos. Chapels will be set about the oval's rim or along the nave to accent the illusion of height, as well as to meet the needs of the congregation. Space will be left for memorials and votive ornaments which others may wish to place there. It must be an attempt, as Bayley's design is, at a formal composition, — with ornament very much present — which does not exclude the city about it, which rewards the world outside besides the faithful within, and which unerringly leads us to its heart, the cross above the altar. "Domine, dilexi decorem domus tuae."

Given the opportunity a higher aim awaits the ambitious. A great American who found it first for himself in the Gallery of Apollo in the Palace of the Louvre has offered a rare definition. "We were not aware of style, though on the way to become so, but were aware of mystery, which indeed was one of its forms . . ." wrote Henry James, recalling his first vision of it as a boy at the side of the older William. ". . . In those beginnings I felt myself most happily cross that bridge over to Style constituted by the wondrous Galerie d'Apollon, drawn out for me as a long but assured initiation and seeming to join with its supreme coved ceiling and inordinately shining parquet a prodigious tube or tunnel through which I inhaled little by little, that is again and again, a general sense of *glory*. [The italic is his.] The glory meant ever so many things at once, not only beauty and art and supreme design, but history and fame and power, the world in fine raised to the richest and noblest expression." *

We, his heirs, need not be discouraged. We have a pendant to the Gallery in the rotunda of the National Capitol, with Latrobe's great round hall, Walter's dome, Trumbull's canvases and Brumidi's ceiling ("The Apotheosis of Washington"), we know the meaning of visual glory. And the new architecture, inspired by our classical heritage, will call on glory.

* Passage from Henry James, *A Small Boy and Others*, quoted with permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

Drawings by E. Powis Jones. His work, as a painter and etcher, has appeared in many museum exhibitions in the United States.

Toward a Whole Architecture

JOHN KNOX SHEAR *

TODAY'S architecture, like today's music and painting and sculpture — like any new things in any time — does not permit easy analysis. The luxury of dogmatic judgments is afforded only to those who do not sense or do not care that architecture is the complex expression of the activities and aspirations of complex creatures — men.

Any evaluation of architecture which does not look at the whole of architecture, which does not proceed from some understanding of the whole range of human need and satisfaction, is something less than valuable; it is often hurtful.

It is not enough to say that modern architecture has not learned to express itself in gracious language. Nor is it enough to defend it on the basis of its social intentions. These are partial truths which, in common with all partialities, lead away from rather than toward understanding. An informed appreciation may be impossible of achievement, but certainly it must find its point of departure in the recognition of the essential conflicts with which architecture is concerned.

Architecture is complex because it is involved in and must constantly deal with opposites. It has not always reconciled them; often it has clung to one or the other of these opposites. The swiftly changing conditions of the past hundred years have forced a succession of isolated points of view — things were either black or white. But we now have the chance, as never before, to learn from history the necessity of exploiting the attraction, the tension, that exists between opposites; to work with dual systems without which, in electricity, we cannot develop current and without which, in architecture, we cannot generate the power to light the spirit of man.

We must learn to welcome and work with opposites. The expression in our architecture of the reconciliation of basic opposites can be our richest source of satisfaction. We must use all means at our disposal; for example, solids and voids, lights and darks, transparency

and opaqueness, tension and compression, in the job of organizing space and form to express man's fundamentally dual nature, that compound of body and soul, of activity and aspiration, of concern with the general and concern with the particular.

Architecture's richest rewards — for our senses, our minds, and our spirits — stem largely from the very duality that makes man and his architecture complex. From earliest times man has required that his buildings and his towns play a complicated role. His demands have always ranged from the most elemental one of shelter to the most subtle one of symbolism. From shelter to symbolism; from the real to the ideal: two extremes which, in fact, involve both the senses and mind. The very concept of the ideal is a product of the mind. While the senses address themselves, and respond, to the particular, the concrete, and the specific, the mind contemplates the general and the ideal.

The basic conflict reveals itself in many ways; major among these are problems of time, of space, and of purpose. We ask that our buildings express all these. Time involves the opposites of the *now* and *then*, in which *then* is for some largely yesterday, for others largely tomorrow. For all, there is the problem of building in such a way as to express at one time (now) both our memory of yesterday and our hope for the morrow. Our basic and agonizing problem is how to build in the *stream of time*. The last hundred years has been a period in this stream of time. Evolution is not smooth; its processes operate at an uneven pace; there are accelerations, and there are pauses.

THESE past hundred years in this country have been a period of the most

* Editor-in-chief of *Architectural Record*, formerly head of the department of architecture at Carnegie Institute of Technology; from 1949 was engaged in practice in Pittsburgh. He is identified in architectural circles with activities in the American Institute of Architects, and in educational circles through participation in the work of the collegiate schools of architecture.

rapid evolutionary acceleration. The full impact of the industrial revolution began to be felt in the eighteen fifties. Almost exactly a hundred years ago the country was turned inside out by civil war. The great movement to the west was almost paralleled in time by the beginning of massive waves of immigration. These, followed by two world wars, brought new exchanges and experiences, which developed new attitudes. It has been a period of new tools, new materials, new lands, new people, and new ideas — a period unmatched in history for breadth and intensity and swiftness of change.

Inevitably such powerful forces produced reactions in every phase of our life, but nowhere were the reactions more apparent than in building and design. In the architecture of the past hundred years, probably every variation of typical human reaction to change has been illustrated.

We are familiar with the reactions and counter-reactions of this period. We have been told and have read about and can see with our own eyes the first vigorous responses to change in the 1870s and 1880s and 1890s. The balloon frame, the cast iron fronts, the Richardson cottages, the cage frames of Jenny, and of Burnham and Root and Sullivan, are particular examples of the host of ideas and men and buildings which characterized the first decades of conscious response to changing conditions.

We are familiar, too, with the nostalgic reaction which followed; when in the mid-1890s, the defenders of all that was fine came to what they conceived to be the rescue. And the ponderous anachronisms are still piled up, along the streets of our cities and towns. Intense men, often intolerant, answered in violent exaggerated language the threats that the equally intense and intolerant Sullivan and his brothers had posed; buildings addressed almost solely to visual satisfaction, and limited to the vocabulary of the past; buildings so different from those they reacted against, yet so like in the exaggeration of their response.

FOR thirty years almost all our major buildings tried to avoid reality. And for thirty years more, our architects have been struggling to overcome this extreme imbalance. Standing in the stream of time and trying to build there, the archaeologists and proponents of a lifeless classicism and static tradition faced backward. Standing in Chicago and New York, they could find appealing little more than the stimuli of Greece and Rome and the renaissance. Asked to give us buildings which would satisfy our bodies *and* our souls, they said "let them eat cake."

Between the great world wars we felt great stirrings, and saw the beginnings of different things. That particular façade-ism, with its limited appeal, was renounced and rejected. We rediscovered that buildings had other functions as well. We recognized that our technology had given us some new materials and some new tools. We were not surprised when our first "functional" buildings offered little reward to the eyes save the freshness of difference. We explained these as brave beginnings. Things had to be cleaned up before we could begin to find the new appropriate subtleties. We allowed these efforts, too, the privilege of ignoring our past. We said, "You can't do everything at once." The preoccupation of these pioneers with the solely functional, and with tomorrow, seemed justifiable. The monumental, the recollection of our traditions, the genius of the place would come, we thought, in time.

Violent changes had forced the first violent answers. The men who first responded in the series of reactions and counter-reactions can be understood and approved. Jenney and Sullivan, Hunt and McKim, Gropius and Mies, and many others, responded boldly in their own ways to what they saw before them. It could not be expected, even of those men of genius, that they solve all the problems at once. Each in his turn had the boldness of strong convictions and of strong purpose, much of which was necessarily negative.

We now have the advantage of using and channeling our close-at-hand experience against the background of an older history. We can respond to change without sacrificing our chances for a whole architecture.

Perhaps there is an example in the use of glass. That material has been much maligned and much misused. Now we know that glass walls are not richly satisfying answers to every prob-

lem. And yet we can appreciate that glass, with its glistening surface of reflections, can provide sensory stimulation not possible before. We know that the interruption of light and the modulating effect of shade and shadow make direct sensory appeal; but we know, too, that from within our buildings the modulating effects of waxing and waning sunlight is a rich experience, and possible only through glass. We like glass for what it says to our minds as well. Here is a product of our time and our technology. Here is something we have made and can use. And as we come to the realization that glass can appeal to the mind and the senses, we are beginning to use it rewardingly.

WE DO not accept, today, the exclusive and limiting views of architecture which our leaders offered us yesterday. We certainly don't believe that a building must be of stone or that stone must necessarily have carved ornament. We are aware that we have been given new materials, each with its own virtues and each with its own appropriateness; and we know that we have many more architectural means of expressing our emotions and appealing to the senses than through mere ornamental stone carving. On the other hand and at the same time, we can appreciate the rich visual experience which finely wrought stone surfaces afford. But we can appreciate these things without making a career of it; without abandoning hope of finding again some day those subtleties of shape and texture and scale which can make of our buildings equally rewarding experiences.

We are not buying a lot of dogma which our older brothers squandered their fortunes on; because we recognize that it was automatically self-limiting. The word "organic," and the word "functional," now seem to have had

too-private meanings. And while we respect the authors of the concepts and value their buildings, we recognize that both ideas and buildings may have been more personal than universal. In fact, we are less likely to accept the notion of universally valid specific forms — ornamental or constructive. We are learning that the palette with which we have to work is far richer than either brick-and-cypress, or glass-and-steel, or stone-and-bronze.

AND what must we follow — those of us who want to address the whole problem, who realize that architecture which is more than ornament, must survive the grotesque and yet avoid the bland; those of us who reject both the archaeological imitation and the middle road of mediocrity — who are looking for a higher road? Those who would create a *whole* architecture for *whole* people must have curiosity first of all, and this cannot happen to those who close their eyes and ears, who end their search for truth in some architectural god of their youth, and surrender their burdens while subordinating their personalities, whether that god be a man or an exclusive idea.

Curiosity will lead to experience, and from experience will come understanding. But to experience must be added that kind of imagination which is informed by a sense of the whole and a sense of the significant within the whole. And to imagination we must add that quality of conviction without which technique is fruitless.

Curiosity, experience, imagination, conviction, and technique; these are what we must bring to architecture, and to the degree that we lack any of these, our buildings will suffer, if not die. In any event, we cannot surrender ourselves to the dead hand of nostalgic archaeology.

Editor's Diary: XX

JANUARY 26, 1956. Called on Sister Mary of the Compassion, O.P. at the Convent of the Dominican Sisters, Union City, New Jersey. She told me of plans to open a convent in Dubuque in which all work (crafts and art) would be done on a high profes-

sional level. The story of the foundation — when and if — will be written for us by Mary Ellen Evans.

February 6, 1956. My first opportunity to act as a consultant in Columbia University's school of architecture — with

AN
EXAMPLE
OF WHAT
CAN BE
DONE
THROUGH
INTELLIGENCE
AND
TALENT



Photo Larry B. Nicholson Jr.

Restoration of interior of Immaculate Conception cathedral, Kansas City, Missouri—executed under the general direction of Charlton Fortune. The sanctuary appointments were designed and executed by David Mackie and I. L. Roark, Jr., in collaboration with Miss Fortune. They also collaborated in the color coordination for the entire interior.



MONASTIC WING FOR SAINT JOHN'S ABBEY, COLLEGEVILLE, MINNESOTA

This is the first element in a total scheme which anticipates a complete change in the abbey's physical structure.

Marcel Breuer, architect.



A

"The Benedictine tradition at its best challenges us to think boldly and to cast our ideals in forms which will be valid for centuries to come, shaping them with all the genius of present-day materials and technique. We feel that the modern architect, with his orientation towards functionalism and honest use of materials, is uniquely qualified to produce a Catholic work. In our position it would, I think, be deplorable to build anything less, particularly since our age and our country have thus far produced so little truly significant religious architecture."

The Right Reverend Baldwin Dworschak, O.S.B.
Abbot, Saint John's Abbey.

(Liturgical Arts, February, 1954, page 47)



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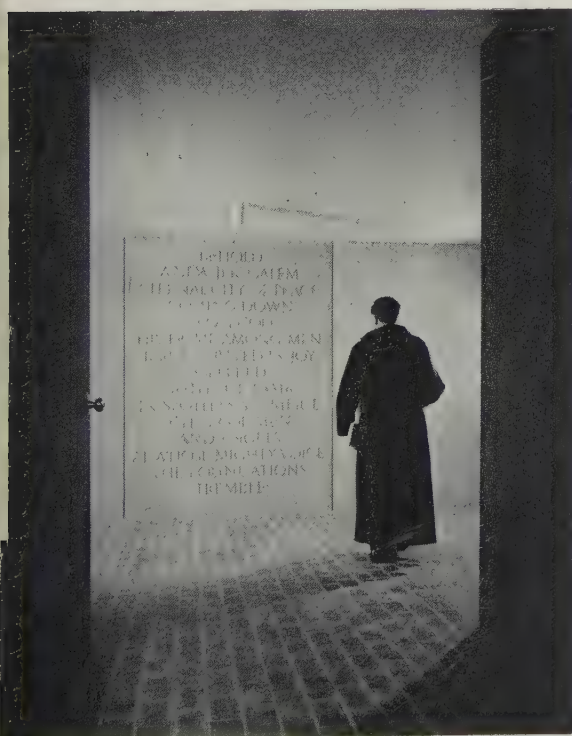
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A. View from north-east. Large concrete block area shows connection with future abbey church. **B.** Fireplace in abbot's reception room of bush hammered concrete. The concrete mixture was filled with chips of white marble and black granite. **C.** Main staircase. The cantilevered treads are of local dark gray granite carried on a reinforced concrete beam. Handrails are oil rubbed teak. Perforated wall of brick. Mosaic-like background is actually a photo mural. **D.** Cloister screen of oil rubbed teak in main entrance hall. **E.** View from entrance of future sacristy. Inscription cut into granite panels designed by Frank Kacmarcik. **F.** Altar in abbot's chapel. Screen is of oil rubbed teak. Window behind altar designed by Joseph Albers, of Yale University, makes use of a new process of photo sensitive glass, produced by the Corning Glass Company. It is of several shades of gray. The ceiling-gold leaf applied directly to the rough concrete slabs. Floor of waxed brick. The tester is painted a deep clear blue. The altar is of granite. **G.** Community recreation room. Photo mural decoration. Floor of polished brick. Frame of fireplace is also of brick; the panels are of cut granite. The ceiling of exposed concrete slabs is painted white. Once the landscaping is completed the view of the lake from this community room will be excellent.

The general color scheme throughout is based on a play of white walls and ceilings against the red of the brick, the grey of the granite, and the polished teak.



E

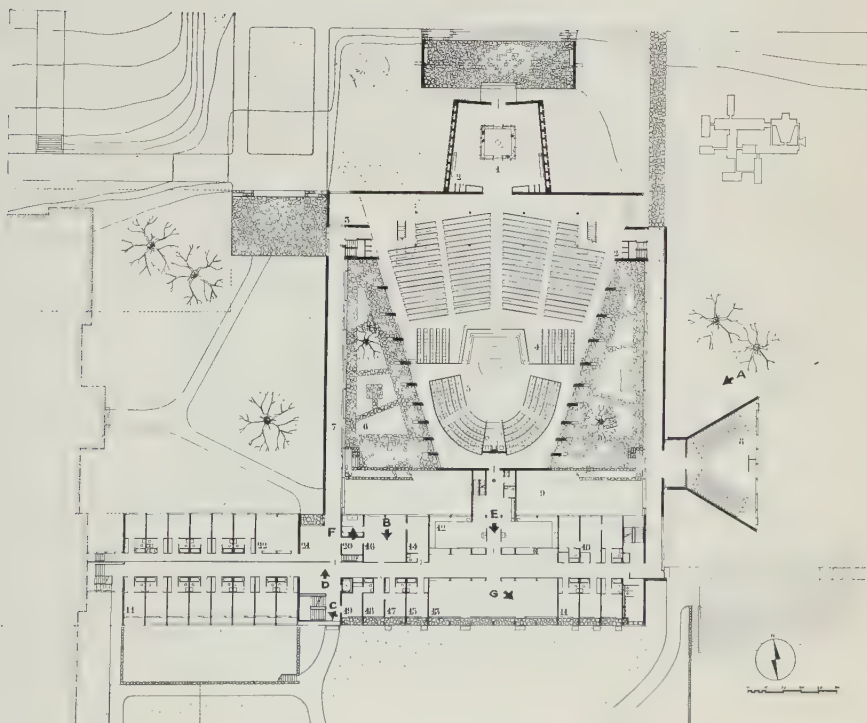
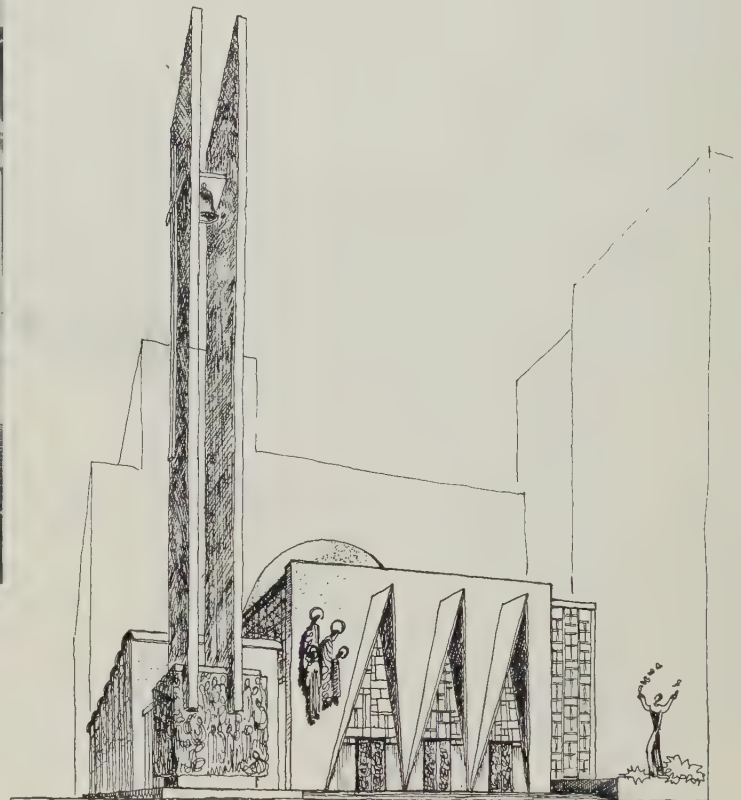




Photo Riehle studios

A supreme example of American renaissance decoration. The baldachin in the cathedral of Saint Paul, Saint Paul, Minnesota, was designed by Whitney Warren.

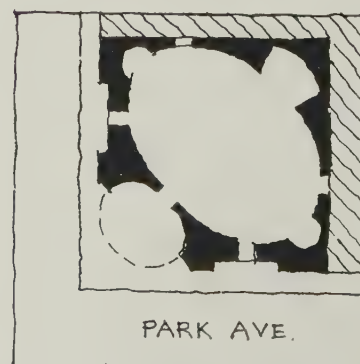
To appreciate the illustrations on this page see Henry Hope Reed's text on page 53; John Knox Shear's article on page 57, and the editorial comments. The captions for the "new" look are by Mr. Reed.



The editor's preference for the same spot. This design allows for the art of stained glass, for the sculptor, for the mural painter and all the arts that can bring warmth in our churches today—all within the normal evolution of each art.



A design in classical terms pointing the way to the architecture of the future. Plan and elevation of a church that might have been designed for lower Park Avenue, New York City, by John Barrington Bayley, 1956. Standing on a corner lot near the Grand Central Terminal, the entrance hinges on the axis formed by the Station as if to face its famous façade.



Bruno Souza, a native of Goa, India — whose thesis is to be a church for a particular spot in his native city. Fortunately, Mr Souza has an understanding of the liturgy and knows that such an understanding precedes the elaboration of any design; the plan comes first, all elements then radiating from the altar. In this sense, form really follows function; in the planning and designing of churches, students too often forget this simple fact. Several years ago, a young student told me that what he called *liturgical hindrances* would interfere with the integrity of his design! It will be interesting to follow Mr Souza's elaboration of his design; all the more interesting since he will seek to have some feeling of Gaon architecture in his final plan.

February 14, 1956. Lunch with Mr and Mrs Ennio Canino, young architects from Rome, here on a fellowship to give courses at the University of Notre Dame and at Saint Mary's College, South Bend, Indiana. We had corresponded for the past six months concerning material to appear eventually in a special issue of our magazine on Italy. The material so far at hand is excellent and more will come, from which a good choice can be made. The Canino's design for a new church to be erected in Rome, and their ideas on the whole confused question of modern art and architecture, are like a breath of fresh air. Their collaboration should make this forthcoming Italian issue a memorable one — it will be, I hope, our twenty-fifth Anniversary number!

February 16, 1956. From the February 1956 *The Clergy Review* (England) we find a welcome article by John J. Coyne, on *CIRCUMDATA VARIETATE Ecclesiastical Lace*. This quotation is much to the point: "It is certainly astonishing that men who would indignantly repudiate any suggestion of effeminacy in the rest of their wearing apparel yet feel themselves apparently undressed unless they attend liturgical functions looking like a Victorian window. And the rare priest who is found wearing a plain, much more a full, surplice, must be prepared to listen repeatedly to the tiresome jest that he has gone all Anglican. The truth is, of course, that the Protestant Church of England took over the surplice it found in use at the time of the reformation. Not only did the Catholic pre-reformation clergy wear the plain linen surplice that finds

its dignity in admirable proportions, but prelates also wore plain rochets. There are many portraits extant both of continental and English dignitaries showing them without a vestige of lace in their choir dress."

Father Coyne further deals with the new horror these days: "... the surplice of nylon or allied thread. It is not altogether transparent, but it is certainly related to those ladies' nylons so universally advertised as "sheer."

May we suggest that those among the clergy who wear plain surplices reply to their *lacy* confrères by waving a lace handkerchief and then sprinkling them with a delicate perfume. That should take care of the "Anglican" jibe!

February 23, 1956. Another thesis student from Columbia University called at the office to discuss his problem — Laszlo Sandor. We spent a pleasant and, I hope, fruitful hour talking theory as a necessary prelude to actual planning. Then I can look over the preliminary sketches as the thesis progresses and the final result should be interesting. Both Mr Souza and Mr Sandor understand and appreciate the discipline of the liturgy and that makes things easier for me.

February 23, 1956. To the Thursday meeting of the Catholic Interracial Council, 20 Vesey Street, New York City, to hear Mother Monica, of the Congregation of the Medical Missionaries of Mary, tell of her five years' experience in Tanganyika. We heard a most interesting talk on the work in Africa by this comparative newcomer among the African missionary orders — founded in Ireland in 1937. Accounts of this kind, on life as it is lived by the people in Africa, are very valuable to me at the moment as the background material so necessary to understand problems at another level — art and building.

February 28, 1956. Italian mosaic work in general leaves me cold, and the usual products from the Vatican mosaic shops leave me numb! But some of the work of the Monticelli mosaic studio, in Rome, is really fine. Mr Monticelli called at the office, and I was given a new sidelight on what can be done in Italy. Much of the work done by his studio in the US is of the usual dull, realistic category, but photographs of some of the *secular* work showed it to be much more alive. Of course, you cannot

very well ask a business man to cut his financial throat by refusing work, but some clients should really be told a few facts!

March 7, 1956. A note from Sister Mary of the Compassion, whose paintings have been illustrated several times in LITURGICAL ARTS. She is very much interested in selling these paintings (Saint Gabriel, archangel; Saint John Fisher; the Last Supper); also watercolor landscapes of England, Italy, and the USA. All proceeds for a charitable purpose. We hope some of our readers will help matters by writing directly to Sister Mary of the Compassion, O.P. Dominican Convent, 14th and West Streets, Union City, New Jersey.

Such paintings and watercolors would make ideal gifts for seminarians, or for the walls of a rectory or the waiting room in a hospital — in fact, for anywhere.

March 8, 1956. To another talk at the Catholic Interracial office — this time by William Fagg, deputy keeper in the department of ethnography at the British Museum. The subject: *Christianity and African Tribal Art*. The difficulties encountered by missionaries in recent decades in fully understanding the meaning (to the African) of much of his art has led at times to an overpowering desire to rid converts of all pagan evidences and so destroy much that was good and could have been adapted. Mr Fagg alluded to the five year experiment conducted by Father L. K. Carroll in his southwestern Nigerian mission. Father Carroll is located in a region where tribal art was as yet unspoiled, and he developed it along Christian lines. Several years ago I received photographs and a text from Father Carroll, and now that I have the opportunity to go to Africa all this material will form a valuable part of another special issue of the magazine. In many ways and for many reasons this seems a good time to study all these simmering questions of religious art and architecture in Africa. We are at a turning point, and the next ten years will tell the story — of success or failure!

March 12, 1956. Mrs Bernard McDermott, of Akron, Ohio, called to show me photos of her enamel work — really "duco" paintings on wood — and particularly color slides of each enamel or painting. It looked to me like excellent

and imaginative work, some of it religious in subject matter, and again I thought of the possibilities of fine work for the Church being available in so many quarters. Reproductions in the magazine of work such as that by Mrs McDermott do not always do justice to the real thing and, after all, only actual commissions can bring tangible results. Sometimes I dream of the day when reproductions in our quarterly might automatically result in direct commissions. That is what I always have in mind!

March 13, 1956. Lunch with Joe Shelzi, whom I had last met at Father Hessler's mission, at Bacalar, Quintana Roo, Mexico. He was then working high up on a scaffold, repairing the façade of the old church and hanging the new bell. He told of the havoc wrought by the hurricane several months ago and how part of the roof was blown away, and of other damage to the walls, etc. Chetumal was largely destroyed, if not entirely by the hurricane, then later by the tidal wave.

Joe and his wife Teresa have been travelling about the US doing missionary work for the lay apostolate and collecting funds for the Bacalar mission. His hope is to get a big bulldozer to clear the jungle and prepare the ground for agriculture of a kind that will result in cash crops for the people down there — to make up for the destruction of the mahogany and chicle industries.

Anyone interested in helping the Bacalar reconstruction can reach either Father Donald Hessler, M.M. or Joseph Shelzi, at; Calle 15 de Septiembre #22, Chetumal, Quintana Roo, Mexico.

March 14, 1956. When the principal of any office or shop dies many are tempted to assume that it means the end of work from that quarter. When our good friend John Howard Benson, died (he was one of the early group that met at Portsmouth Priory in 1927 to discuss the "birth" of the Liturgical Arts Society) we wondered whether the great work of the John Stevens shop would continue at the high level maintained while John was at work. The answer came today in the form of an announcement which we reproduce above.

March 21, 1956. To Pennsylvania State University for a lecture under the auspices of the department of architecture and at the invitation of Professor

*The John Stevens Shop
has just lost
JOHN HOWARD BENSON.*

*He has left us with
a tradition of fine lettering
which we intend to continue.*

*We are fortunate
to have in the shop two men who
have trained under him &
carved his inscriptions
for many years.*

*Together we intend to carry on
the high standard of craftsmanship
which has always characterized
his work.*

Esther Fisher Benson

Newport, R.I.

1 March, 1956

Andrew W. Case, presently chairman of the Fine and Applied Art section, a painter in his own right, and a long-time friend of ours.

Thanks to Professor Case and Mr Milton Osborne (head of the department of architecture) there was a good-size gathering of over a hundred; that is not bad in a large university where so many activities are going on at the same time. To reach University Park is an interesting adventure. Mr and Mrs Case were at the Lewistown station, and drove me to the University, thirty-one miles away, over hill and dale. The ideal vehicle to travel to "Penn State" in would be a helicopter.

On the way we passed through Boalsburg, where the Columbus Family chapel is located, which contains relics of the Columbus family. Boalsburg is the birthplace of Memorial Day, and truly a typical American village. A bit of culinary news about that part of the country has to do with the town of Gallitzin, where the epicurian will find the Erculiani restaurant at which, I am told, the food is excellent and plentiful.

March 25, 1956. Some weeks ago someone at CBS phoned to ask for material that might be used as background for a reading of Paul Claudel's poem, *Le Chemin de la Croix*. Later, Mr Carl Beier of CBS called at the office, and when he expressed an interest in the work of Rouault I thought it best to suggest that he call on André Girard, at Nyack, who could give him all the information he needed and whose own work might well solve the problem of background material for the projected TV show on Palm Sunday.

Everything went along well, and this morning I was at the rehearsal preceding the ten A.M. television broadcast in color and black and white. Claudel's text was beautifully read by Siobhan McKenna and Fritz Weaver, both now playing in "The Chalk Garden." The care with which such a programme is prepared, the excellent color photography and general set-up, were all a revelation to me. And Girard's style of painting is particularly well suited to the medium of television.

All in all, this was a measure of the work our Society can do beyond the more parochial limits of architecture.

March 29, 1956. The importation of the hand-woven silk fabrics of the guild of weavers in Kyoto, Japan, has presented many difficulties in past years. Thanks to the efforts of Sister M. Clare, O.P. of Siena Studio, Mission San Jose, California, and the Fathers of Saint Joseph's Abbey, Spencer, Massachusetts, a bill was introduced in Congress which would waive customs duty for certain specific purposes.

Sister Clare's recent letter gives further details concerning the successful termination of these efforts and we here quote pertinent passages:

"The Bill to exempt the hand-woven fabrics of "Goten", which was introduced by Congressman Philbin at the request of the Cistercians of Spencer, Massachusetts, has become a reality. It passed the House July 28, 1955, without opposition. The Finance committee received it favorably on February 20, 1956 and recommended that it be passed. (H.R. 4376). March 19th the Senate passed it and letters and a telegram told us that it was now on the President's desk awaiting his signature, which was given April 2nd. This new law requires only a letter of declaration to the Customs that the equivalent is not obtainable in the United States and it is then delivered "duty free" to religious societies making vestments, even for sale, a most unusual amendment. We hope the big obstacle is now removed to the use of these pure silks and handwoven tapestries, etc., especially now that the weavers are producing patterns of a more abstract design, slipping away from the purely oriental patterns."

We hope that those who produce vestments will take advantage of this new law and use these fine handwoven silk fabrics from Kyoto. We can all be grateful to Father L. H. Tibesar (Maryknoll), now stationed at Saint Teresa's Catholic Church, Kyoto, for having started the ball rolling some five years ago.

March 29, 1956. A letter from a Cape Town architect, Mr Dudley S. Welch, a member of a group there who wish

to form a society similar to our organization. He asks whether members of his group can become members of LAS — of course! Mr Welch remarks: "We are so cut off here that continued strengthening from an outside source is needed." He concludes his letter on the welcome note that the Archbishop of Cape Town has approved the formation of this new group and that His Excellency advised him to write to us. One more proof of the widening influence of the Liturgical Arts Society.

April 6, 1956. The work of the Grail should always elicit the sympathy, if not the direct support, of those who appreciate the need for the lay apostolate. What I saw of this apostolate in Hong Kong, in India, Japan, Yucatan, made me realize its importance.

Now comes the good news of the formation of a "Grail Institute for Overseas Service" to prepare young Catholic women for lay apostolic work. An outgrowth of the mission training program inaugurated in 1951 at Grailville Community College, Loveland, Ohio, the new institute will open this fall at 308-310 Clinton Avenue, Brooklyn 5, New York, with a faculty of distinguished clerical and lay missionaries and scholars, and a student body drawn from all parts of the United States.

Grail-trained teams are at work in Uganda, Tanganyika, Belgian Congo,

Basutoland, Egypt, and South Africa, on the African continent; Brazil and Surinam, in South America; Indonesia, Hong Kong, New Guinea and Pakistan, in Asia.

Further information on this Grail Institute for Overseas Service may be obtained from Miss Janet Kalven, director, at the Brooklyn address.

April 16, 1956. To the Architectural League for the opening exhibition of *A new Look at stained glass in architecture*, by Christopher Scadron, stained glass designer, and Michael Savoia architectural designer. This is the result of months of preparation and I am now glad to have urged Scadron to go on with the elaboration of his ideas for a more imaginative use of colored glass windows — (see July 11, 1955 entry on page 158 of the August, 1955, issue of this magazine).

Savoia had drawings for a new church and for a court house and Scadron produced color designs for the windows — also several samples of actual glass blocks set in reinforced cement. The exhibition was well prepared and set up in the "pine room" of the Architectural League. Scadron successfully proves that abstract designs can provide exciting patterns well suited for certain elements in church design. His color sense is first-rate and his arrangements of cement versus color glass are ex-

tremely effective. As usual, all Scadron and Savoia now need is a commission.

April 24, 1956. Another Grail day. Miss Elizabeth Reed (whom I had first met in Hong Kong in 1953) and Miss Janet Kalven, of the Brooklyn Grail, called at the office. The "editorial" lunch gave me the opportunity to discuss the African sphere of the Grail's activities. I hope to meet some of their members in Basutoland.

Later in the day came a letter from Miss Donna Myers, of the Philadelphia Grail. She had called at the office last week and her story of forthcoming activities seemed so interesting that I felt our readers might like to know what will go on in the near future.

A *Festival of the arts* will be held at Grailville, Loveland, Ohio — August 4-12. It will consist of a course for artists, writers, musicians, students of the theatre arts. The festival program will include an exhibition of work by Christian artists, a concert by the Grailville polyphonic choir, dramatic readings, and a lecture on "The Christian artist today" by an old friend of the Society, William Schickel, whose work has been illustrated in the quarterly. Another similar festival will be held in Philadelphia, in April, 1957. Further information on this one can be had from Miss Myers, 4520 Chester Avenue, Philadelphia 43, Pennsylvania.

Reports from Lucerne and Bologna *

LUCERNE. In 1950, the first International Congress of Catholic Artists was held in Rome, September 3-5 and duly reported in the November, 1950, issue of LITURGICAL ARTS. Now we can give news of the second such Congress held at Lucerne, Switzerland, September 5-9, 1955.

In an introduction, the Bishop of Lausanne, The Most Reverend François Charrière, outlines the major phases of a sound sacred art, along the lines of episcopal prudence but allied to a sense of generosity and an awareness of the defects of that pious point of view that often bears little relation to the needs of

the people. The bishop claimed for the artist a deep spirituality and an efficacious and sincere boldness in the exercise of his art.

The well-known painter Guido Severini hints at the distinction between religious art in general and sacred art destined for the church edifice. When an artist wishes to work for a church he must accept the function and destination of the work of art — a distinction willingly accepted by any artist of tal-

ent. Severini alludes to the quarrel over figurative and non-figurative painting. But there are numberless possibilities in each case, and neither should be condemned outright. The real difficulty is that the artist who wishes to express himself in the field of religious art must fight an intellectual atmosphere hostile to sacred art, or at best indifferent to it. The artist today must nevertheless understand the times in which he lives and labor to bring such an understanding to a high moral level, above scientific and technical values.

The role of the Christian artist in our world is discussed by Pierre Courthion,

* Based on material received from F. Pfammatter (Lucerne) and Pier Luigi Giordani (Bologna)

of Paris. He points out that in the recent past, up to van Gogh, so-called religious art had lost all conviction, all depth, and had become in reality a mere portrayal of historical events, much as the covers of the Saturday Evening Post mirror, in an indifferent and innocuous manner, workaday events. He states that van Gogh was a profoundly religious artist, but not in the manner of the wordly and intellectual artist of the renaissance. And this is an important distinction, since most of the influence wielded by the majority of our prelates is infused with the poison of that renaissance, when religious art was less conscious of its moral and religious values. Further, Pierre Courthion makes clear the moral responsibility of the Christian artist toward his work, and it is often this responsibility, this inner conviction of the artist, that makes him seem at odds with the community. And while the writer warns against excesses of uncontrolled individualism he also urges the ecclesiastical authorities to entertain a fuller understanding of the artistic potentialities available to them. Along with other commentators Courthion alludes to the irony of that fact that too seldom have artists like Severini been given adequate opportunities; or that an artist like Georges Rouault has never been commissioned to paint a Last Judgment in a church.

To those who will hide their nostalgia and their fear of any fresh idea behind the cliché that "there is nothing new under the sun . . ." Courthion recalls the other half of Delacroix's dictum: ". . . but the sun does not shed its rays on all in the same manner." We are reminded that each epoch has its own preoccupations, its interior exigencies, its particular needs for expression, its own style, and to deny these is to deny that grace flows where it will. This should make us humble when confronted with the phenomenon of genuine artistic creation. Even the non-Christian artist may be capable of creating works of genuine religious value. God operates not only through the believer, but also through the non-believer and the moment when He inspires a non-believer is sacred. It is then that divine grace can infuse the creative talents of anyone and lead to a real, if unavowed, religious spirit. Then it is the mission of the Church to ease the contacts between the artist and the Christian community; the artist must, in turn, aid the Church in spreading divine truth among men.

As a corollary to Pierre Courthion's thesis, Max André Rossion, director of the École supérieure des Beaux-Arts "Saint-Luc," Liège, states that art is the bridge between the human and the divine. But this human element in art is conditioned by the civilisation which is ours and which is slowly evolving toward maturity.

ALL the themes in the papers of the Lucerne Congress bore on the relation of the artist to the Church. In his paper J. B. Hilder, orchestra leader of Lucerne, handles the subject with the rhythm of a musician, the rhythm of history. He quotes Cardinal Newman concerning architecture: "For myself certainly I think that that style which, whatever be its origin, is called gothic, is endowed with a profound and a commanding beauty, such as no other style possesses with which we are acquainted, and which probably the Church will not see surpassed till it attain to the Celestial City. . . . But this feeling should not blind us, rather it should awaken us to the danger lest what is really a divine gift be incautiously used as an end rather than as a means."* While Newman expresses a preference for the style "called gothic" he also allows for the dynamism of tradition and warns us not to confuse the end with the means.

Mr Hilders also warns the artist, once he wishes to work for the Church, to submerge any excessive exercise of personality and to work within the discipline of the commission and the needs of the community. He must willingly submit to an ecclesiastical order, and he then becomes an apostle at the service of the faithful. The artist's dignity and his responsibility then are threefold, because of the dialogue he entertains with God, with the Church, and with the faithful. But there is also the balancing responsibility of the clergy and of the people to surround the artist with that aura of generosity and understanding he needs so much.

Among the conditions necessary for artistic creation, Professor Anton van Duinkerken, of Holland, argues for the acceptance of the condition of man in the world. He insists that Christian art cannot live unless we look squarely at the concrete and temporal condition of present-day Christendom. He reminds us again of the need for a free and generous acceptance of great art and recalls the condemnation of such works of art

as the Way of the Cross by Albert Servaes, which was removed from the Carmelite church at Luithagen, Belgium; of another way of the cross removed from the parochial church at Wahlwiler, Limbourg, and another in the church of Bonn-Tannenbusch, Germany, recently covered over. Some of these have since been accepted, and it is ironic that a painting of the procession of the Blessed Sacrament by Antoine Derkinderen, refused in 1888 by the clergy of the Beguinage at Amsterdam, is now the crowning glory of the chapel in that institution.

In conclusion, Ramon Sugranyes de Franch, secretary general of PAX ROMANA, under whose auspices the sessions of this congress were held, states that the meetings are the means whereby fruitful contacts can be maintained between artists of all countries. To make this contact possible is the task of PAX ROMANA which, according to Gilson's definition, is to organize good will everywhere.

BOLOGNA. In Bologna, September 23 and 24, 1955, there assembled engineers and architects from many parts of Italy. The congress opened with a greeting from the rector of the University of Bologna.

The talk of His Eminence, Giacomo Cardinal Lercaro, was based on the encyclical *Mediator Dei*. The Cardinal stated that Christian architecture, from the earliest days, had been part of the contemporary artistic tradition and while it was liturgically functional it had never become crystalized in any particular style or form. The church was the center of the community's life and it differed from pagan temples in that it was designed not for individual worship but for the voice of the entire community and their union, or reunion, with God's family. Architecture performs its earthly miracle when it points the way to Heaven. That is when the architect is animated by the collective spirit of the liturgy. In closing His Eminence emphasized two essential points:

1. The artist who plans a church must be steeped in the spirit of the liturgy so that he may interpret to others, in their own language, the echo of the divine words.

2. The community must be led to understand that tradition does not uphold any particular form of art or any historical period, for God is the God of

* *The Idea of a University*, 1921 edition, page 82.

the living. The language of sacred art is that of the soul of the people *on earth*. The clergy, the artists, the people — the living Church — are the three elements on which the fabric of the sacred edifice is raised to Heaven.

Professor Giovanni Michelucci, of the University of Bologna, in his talk on *The Church and the City*, stressed the fact that planning and housing in the city can only be born of human needs and cooperation. Science, technical skills, and the arts are the servants of social, religious, and political needs. When private interests interfere our "democratic" ideals of city planning are likely to become mandatory and autocratic. Then *civitas et ecclesia* are no longer understood. We can then fall prey to the temptation to restore old monuments on the assumption that a straightened wall also restores some moral value. For example, Professor Micheluzzi spoke of the removal from the site of the cathedral at Ferrara of the portico which had been built as a market for vegetable and fruit dealers. The idea was to restore the cathedral to its pristine beauty, forgetting

that the little portico was a reminder of the days when men looked to the church as their mother and defender and liked to feel close to their protector. The purists forget that the Church is first of all a guardian of its people rather than mere *fabricated* beauty. And so the city no longer exists, in the traditional sense, as being an end in itself, but it has become a formula — an intellectual construction. Other speakers echoed the need for the realization that our times need a live faith in each of us; for the need of a spontaneous assembly of the people around the church which will then lead the architects to erect buildings in tune with its present functions. There is less need for style but there is great need for a spiritual awareness in all aspects of life. The problem is to find new liturgical and architectural forms within the spiritual, moral, and social disciplines of the times.

Both Father Giulio Bevilacqua and Father Tarcisio Picaria insist on a religious art and architecture freed from conventional and *frozen* forms. If Father Picaria expresses surprise that many

architects lack imagination and daring, Quaroni, an architect from Rome, calls attention to the narrow and timid point of view of many among the clergy. Quaroni poses the question: "What is the liturgy for an architect?" then supplies the answer: "It is the plastic development of the religious idea underlying the planning and design of the edifice." Other architects, Giorgio Trebbi, De Angeli, Augostini, Luigi Figini, express similar ideas. Finally, Father Favaro expresses the hope that seminarians will be given at least some aesthetic outlook on this present question of a religious art of our times, shown of personal prejudices or exaggerated commentaries.

The ideas and the hopes which were formulated during the sessions of these congresses at Lucerne and Bologna are harbingers of a future in which religious art will be freed from the dead weight of the past and be allowed to seek its level within a dynamic concept of tradition and the vitality of imaginative design.

M. L.

Art, Sacred and Otherwise *

Comments on a new book

JEAN CHARLOT

THIS book will be welcomed by the artist who works, or ever hopes to work, in the liturgical field. It states Church laws concisely and authoritatively. Its *dos* and *don'ts*, rather than being personal to the author, sum up historical tradition and sound practice. It also takes into account the problems of today. The illustrations, picked, as I understand, on this side of the Atlantic, add a pleasing boldness. Using this book as a guide, an artist can come to a better understanding of what is expected of him.

The author, the Reverend J. B. O'Connell, says: "The church plan must not neglect the claims of the aesthetic. These, however, are the province of the architect, the artist, and the craftsman, not the primary concern of the liturgist." There is, then, a sub-

stantial no-man's land between what is permissible and what is forbidden in matters of sacred art. To comment on the book from the point of view of the practicing artist, and only inasmuch as it is concerned with the problems of art-making, is the very limited purpose of this review.

First, let us look at the pitfalls that threaten the unwary craftsman who intends to work for the Church. On the right there lurk, as Cardinal Celso Costantini so forcefully puts it, "... cheap reproductions of painted plaster statues and all the industrial

rubbish that has invaded so many churches." On the left there are other dangers, labeled by Father O'Connell modernistic art — an art "over subjective, often bizarre and extravagant, sometimes coarse and even barbaric, the product of undisciplined sentimentalism and mere ephemeral whim." Such art, if as black as painted, should indeed also be avoided.

This feat of stepping tip-toe on a razor's edge without falling into either chasm makes a most disquieting picture both for the cleric who would become an art patron and for the artist who longs to put his craft at the service of the Church. In theoretical fairness, Father O'Connell fulminates impartially against the right and against the left, suggesting imminent danger from both directions.

* Being a review of CHURCH BUILDING AND FURNISHING, by The Reverend J. B. O'Connell, published (American edition) by the University of Notre Dame, in the Liturgical Studies series, volume two.

LET us close the book now, and check theory against practice. Let us make a round of churches and investigate their worth, or their shortcomings, in the matter of sacred art. The picture changes drastically. The careful balance that the book suggests, the ideal of church art as an example of the *juste milieu*, will receive a rude jolt in practice, as we go from church to church in our aesthetic pilgrimage. Indeed, very few of the churches we visit will show anything as blatant as originality. And where are works to be found in a modern idiom bold enough to be suspected of fellow-traveling with the modernistic? This nightmare of churches rendered unworthy by tortured *isms* and sadistic distortions proves to be mostly a dream. Certainly in our day it is not an enemy strong enough to upset, or even to rock, sound Christian tradition.

Formidable, however — all-pervading, arrayed in armor, and so strong in numbers and entrenched positions as to suggest that they have already fought and won the battle — are the samples of industrial rubbish that debase sacred art. There they stand victorious, a guard of dishonor around the altar, a plaster foot on top of their supine foe, impervious to the fulminations of the Congregation of Rites, to the admonitions of Popes, to the opinion of Roman cardinals, and — why not mention it, given that this is after all an aesthetic matter — to the despair of Christian artists. What more accurate description of the average church of today can be found than that in this instruction of the Holy Office: "Let ordinaries forbid second-rate and for the most part stereotyped statues and pictures to be multiplied and improperly and absurdly exposed for the veneration of the faithful on the altars themselves and on the adjoining walls of chapels."

Thus, in practice, it is not the revolution of the *isms* that menaces the position and dignity of sacred art, but — intensely more acute — this comical counterrevolution of bad art, born of lucre, that clutters and clogs the churches with impertinence. Such art is incapable of fulfilling any liturgical function; how, therefore, can it inspire a devotion that did not go into its making? Such art teaches a false doctrine that presents sanctity as a genteel social accomplishment, an activity so mild that it has never displaced even a hair in the coiffure of the fairy plaster princess, or calloused the hand of the monk who cannot read his missal be-

cause a cupid masquerading as the Holy Child is sitting on it. But even such poor art cannot be all neutral: incapable of greatness, it will seep its poison, needle its meanness, into those who make use of it, regardless of pious intent.

One could wish that somewhere in the book Father O'Connell, descending from aesthetic theory to the mention of clerical practice, had acknowledged the cardinal fact that the abomination of the desolation is already entrenched in the temple. If modernistic art ever gained a toe hold, it could be slapped down and bounced out by local ordinaries without causing more than a ripple of protest. What would happen if — in order to zealously preserve the artistic middle-ground that the author, quoting ecclesiastical authorities, presents as the ideal for sacred art — ordinaries would forcefully eject from the churches in their care all third-rate statues and pictures?

WHAT should sacred art look like, then, what should it be? Canon Law states: "Ordinaries . . . are to take care that . . . the forms received from Christian tradition are preserved." Father O'Connell lucidly explains how "forms" can hardly refer to any one style. Rather than physical shapes, they should be understood as *formae*, rules of conduct that go to make the permanent core around which evolves the dynamic pageant of ever-changing styles.

When it comes to a less metaphysical definition of what it is that the artist-craftsman should fashion — perhaps because of the impossibility of encompassing all styles and the modes of all lands in a few words — the Instructions given are vague, and to the literal-minded may prove a letdown. We learn that the artist should do his work ". . . with due regard to the claims of the beautiful." He should clothe religious ideas with "lovely forms." Father O'Connell borrows from Cardinal Costantini what may be the most "horizontal" definition ever voiced of art, "Art is not an enigma to be solved. . . . It ought to know how to make itself understood quickly and give pleasure."

Beauty, loveliness, pleasure, are dangerous terms to apply to sacred art. To the few familiar with the work of the great masters (Cardinal Costantini and Father O'Connell may well be among them) these terms may suggest, however weakly, the meditative exaltation one feels in the presence of aesthetic gran-

deur. As for the many who are familiar only with the mediocre, there is the risk these very terms will be construed as an indictment of all greatness, and used as a sly justification of the worst in church art. Plaster saints are indeed no enigma to be solved. They make themselves understood instantaneously. Those who know nothing about art but who know what they like may well find pleasure in them.

THERE is an implied inner strain between the two functions of liturgical art; that of praising God, and that of catering to the congregation. This art should be sublime on the one hand, and lucid on the other. Its quality will change as the emphasis oscillates between the use of art for the altar and for the people. Though he mentions both functions, Father O'Connell, with a touch of the pragmatic, beams church art mostly towards the people. This process of leveling art down to popular function has its artistic drawbacks. It implicitly puts a premium on the more pedestrian forms of art, while less simple styles will, at the least, arouse suspicion. Thus primed to eject a number of artists from his ideal church, Father O'Connell already feels their resentment; "Some of what I write will probably be unacceptable to certain modern artists." As to what it is that such fellows do, confined as they now are to the outer darkness, serviceable Cardinal Costantini is called upon to fill in details: their art "loses itself in the wild forest of cubist and abstract art." Father O'Connell adds a footnote, necessary to bring the quote up-to-date; "Cubist art, it seems, has faded out of fashion." It has faded, mind you, without ever having been given a chance to spoil a single church wall!

There are, however, other ways of looking at church art than to conceive of it as little more than an illustration, a spur to devotion, a bit of machinery useful to lull the church-goer into quiet through mass and Sunday sermon. Otherwise, why was this problem of scandal, that looms so prominent today, minimized or by-passed as unimportant by past generations of clerics who were also art patrons? Father O'Connell tells a story neatly to the point: "Until the twelfth or thirteenth century, the Christ represented on the cross was the triumphant Redeemer of the world, reigning from the cross, alive, with open eyes, clothed in the colobium and often wearing a jewelled crown. . . . From the

thirteenth century He is mostly depicted as dead, with eyes closed, head dropped, an anguished face, bleeding wounds, crowned with thorns, and naked. . . . This at first shocked the faithful and even aroused indignation."

There have been other famous scandals connected with the history of church art, in fact with some of its greatest accomplishments. Aretino did berate Michelangelo for painting in the Pope's own chapel frescoes "fit at best for a brothel or a steam-bath house." This critic, a great art connoisseur, was giving vent to personal spite; but the strength of the statement came from the fact that, so saying, he gave voice to the bewilderment of so many good people caught in the wildly rising current of the high renaissance. From byzantine to romanesque to gothic; from the elaborations of Bernini to the chaster simplicity of the Matisse chapel at Vence; each coming change hurt men set in their ways, men whose devotions were sentimentally bound to the statues, the windows or frescoes they looked at when they first learned how to kneel and pray.

IN ANCIENT times, churchmen disregarded so completely the *qu'en dirait-on* in favor of greatness that this brave attitude, spread in space and time, can truly be said to be one of the *formae*, one of the constants that can now be used as a guide. Through the centuries, the relation between churchmen and artists has been one of incredible boldness. Abbots and popes were so quick at adopting the new trends that, with the out-focussing that comes with time, it seems as if the commissions they gave initiated, rather than furthered, the new forms. For over fifteen centuries, the history of all western art is as one with the history of church art. Why is Father O'Connell reluctant to concede to the Church its glorious and unmatched role as an art patron; "The Church in her art assimilates — slowly it is true, never in a hurry — what is good from the spirit of the times. . . ." And again; "The Church, while no enemy to real progress, is by its nature prudent and wisely conservative."

The secret of this ancient boldness may be found in a kind of emphasis on the role of sacred art other than that we place today. Art was seen primarily as praise given to God, rather than as a matter of catering to the faithful. Religion itself is more than a social gathering, of more than the formation of useful citizens, docile employees, or

trusted neighbors. First of all, it is the relation, the naked relation, of man to God. In the same way, the facet of sacred art that turns towards the altar is in itself a virtue, an act of faith, a visible prayer, regardless of the presence, or absence, of a congregation. Thus conceived, the role of church art stresses sacredness more than merely the means of reaching the people.

This new angle suggests as a new postulate, that the best art is none too good for God. This requirement of quality is one very distinct from that of readability. We believe in dogmatic mysteries that exist beyond our capacity of stating and of understanding. Is it not natural that the great artist, endowed beyond the usual measure, thinking and practicing his art through a lifetime, may, on another plane than the dogmatic, propose what to less endowed men and less trained eyes will appear to be aesthetic mysteries? Certainly God, present on the altar, can never be puzzled by aesthetic depth, but He may still appreciate the praise implicit in an unusual form: what this art contains of purity, of selflessness, of dedication on the part of the artist, of zeal to refine, compose, and articulate a genuine form of manual and visual prayer.

EVEN though we have at last emerged from the modern "dark ages," when only the gothic was considered a fit style for a church, a flavor of eclecticism still clings to church art, a flavor of which the lay art of our time is quite free.

"The fidelity to Christian tradition in art. . . . does not mean:

1 — Mere copying of past works of art. . . .

2 — It does not mean 'archeologism' . . . an adoption of the old merely because it is old. . . .

3 — It does not exclude the modern, provided it is good and suitable for sacred art. . . ."

If we think of art as decoration, as a pleasing inducement for the faithful, then we may pick, as one does furniture, from this and that century, including our own, elements that will, once put together, procure an ensemble to our taste. If art means for us instead a voice lifted in the presence of God, that will forever in the sanctuary represent us as does the lighted lamp, then the back door for modern art is not enough. Why frisk living art at the door for blackjacks or brass knuckles, if one has no other art to chose from? To praise

God, sacred art must be a live art, born in anguish, embodying enough that is genuine of our times and ourselves to deserve existence through coming centuries. The illusion of a choice among styles grows with the ever-multiplying art folios and color facsimiles that make it deceptively easy to travel back and forth through past eras with all the blasé nonchalance of an Alley Oop. There comes an urge to fill our knapsacks with splendid loot, with gems pried out of context from art history. We stand atop the mountain and survey these many kingdoms, and great is the temptation to believe that they are ours for the picking.

If what we quest after is genuine art, it would be saner to forget so much beautiful and idle knowledge. A total lack of historical perspective would serve us better. Villard de Honnecourt, in the thirteenth century, made a grotesque copy, in his sketchbook, of a roman sarcophagus, and captioned it "The sepulchre of an Arab." Such lack of eclecticism, of tolerance for ancient forms of art, seem to us a professional sin, or at least an intolerable handicap: yet de Honnecourt is one of the most famous builders of cathedrals.

What is more expressive of the exclusive love of modern art that devoured ancient craftsmen, architects, and clerical patrons, than the asymmetrical, lopsided constructions they left us; they may start underground with a romanesque crypt, on which is raised a gothic nave flanked by towers whose tops may emerge into the full renaissance. Each progress, even each change, was so eagerly seized upon that previous overall plans were discarded to make place for each successive stage of "modern art."

Between us and similarly vital accomplishments there intrudes a continuous reassurance and reinvestment of prejudices that we experience each time we contact a past perhaps more comforting to look at than is our present. We sigh for a golden age that will never return: "The time for Raphaels and miracles is past." We hold up as paragons for the living artist objectives and monuments that would better remain for us dehydrated bygones. Strange bedfellows share the subconscious of today's art patron; the byzantines, Angelico, Raphael, Bernini, and so on to Gill and Bosseron Chambers. These dormants and their remembered works constitute the unfair *touchstone* for what the living artist brings, hat in hand, be it blueprint, maquette, or mural cartoon.

THE practicing artist also sees and admires ancient art, and mulls over art facsimiles. At working time, at the moment in which this man — amiable or boorish, proud or humble on everyday contact — acts as an art maker, historical knowledge falls away from him as obsolete. He faces his material, tools in hand, with the same blankness and blandness with which the most provincial craftsman of the so-called dark ages tackled his task. Otherwise, this assumed science, this memorized visual encyclopedia, only gets in the way of what he is about to do — to search for and strike chords that will be valid only inasmuch as they are tuned to his own self and times.

Pope Jules, the one who commissioned the Sistine chapel decorations, quipped once to a cardinal that he had been given power to create cardinals at will, but was powerless to bring forth a Michelangelo. This proud pope's humble assertion could be amplified: no true artist, and he need not be on a level with Michelangelo, can be made by having a man toe the line of ecclesiastical law, or by force-feeding him on liturgical knowledge; no man can become an artist because of personal piety, willing obedience to learned suggestions, or awe at the sacredness of church art. In that sense Father Couturier's opinion holds good; he put more trust in genius than in faith.

Once found, the live artist should somehow be put to work in the house of God. What he does there should, in the words of Pope Pius XII in *Mediator Dei*, "... take into account more the needs of the Christian community than the personal taste and judgment of the artist." One senses here a concern peculiar to the conditions of our time. The inference is that today there exists at least a latent conflict between the requirements of the Church and the path of artistic fulfillment. This idea would surprise past generations of artists, battalions of craftsmen for whom the Church was the ideal and all-understanding patron; men who would have been at a total loss if asked to disentangle the one from the other of their twin goals, liturgical and aesthetic. Conditions have changed. Artists, at least live artists, are now open to suspicion as egocentric, egolatric, smitten with related handicaps. In turn, the artist may be a faithful parishioner, but the art he sees in his parish church will prove mostly an eyesore, and he will learn to pray with his eyes closed.

Perhaps he will pray for a renewal of understanding between cleric and artist, a return to what existed once before.

When such a prayer is answered, this getting together again of clerics and artists need not stir undue trepidation. Artists will prove, on acquaintance, a surprisingly tranquil bunch of fellows. Their problems are mainly those of craftsmen. They know better than the critic or patron that art, whatever its ends and its form, is for them, if it is to be at all, arduous manual labor. They may also remain tactfully silent when told of the chasm between modern and modernistic art, and will meekly promise to be on their best behavior. Actually, the new found usefulness, the monumental scale of the work at hand and its sobering tie-up with architecture, uppermost the sacredness of their mission, will prove more instructive and more imperative than many a paper-pronouncement. Bid to do his best, the artist will do so, in all freedom and all humility.

If I may mention my most recent experience in the liturgical mural field, it did prove a gratifying one. There are soothing affinities between clerics and artists. The cleric, however much time he may spend in strengthening the finances of the parish, is forbidden personal wealth by Canon Law. The artist may not afford lucre anyhow, dealing as he does in a commodity that is not even seasonal. The cleric realizes the primacy of the spiritual order. He knows how physical matter — oil, water, beeswax or fire — may through rites become a carrier and distributor of grace. The artist also is a maker of objects that remain senseless and useless as such, acquiring meaning and function solely on the mysterious plane of the spirit, on the borderline of the spiritual. Affinities will work both ways: once understood Our Lord's saying that the lily of the field is clothed in more splendor than Solomon in all his glory, the seed of esthetic wonder will be sown, and the cleric should see eye to eye with the artist.

Correspondence

Montgomery Center, Vermont

To the Editor of LITURGICAL ARTS:
Dear Sir:

Your excellent plates of stations by Suzanne Nicolas and Peter Watts in the last issue of LITURGICAL ARTS merit

the title of the issue. I do feel, however, that a more extensive theoretical and scholarly development of the subject of the stations of the cross would have been in order. There is to my knowledge no other devotion in the Church which has been so profoundly influenced by "art," and while the stations may not be officially "liturgical" they certainly belong to the public piety of the people of God.

The brief article by Father Thaddeus MacVicar, O.F.M. Cap., about which the February issue centers does not offer quite sufficient information concerning the stations; he seems to confine his remarks to a brief historical treatment of the subject followed by a rather extensive development of the legal aspects involved in the erection of stations. This latter aspect is readily available elsewhere, and has been very succinctly stated by Monsignor Collins in *The Church Edifice and Its Appointments* (Newman, 1946, pp. 257-260). In the interest of art and authenticity, I regret that Father MacVicar did not develop the historical treatment in greater detail. Perhaps he may be able to do so in a future issue of the quarterly.

The most authoritative work in English on the stations of the cross is that of Herbert Thurston, S.J. (*The Stations of the Cross. An Account of Their History and Devotional Purposes*, London, 1906), cited by Father MacVicar. Some years ago, the *Homiletic and Pastoral Review* (pp. 333-344) published an article entitled "The Stations of the Cross" by Fintan Lombard, C.P., who based his treatment upon the work of Thurston. My own knowledge of the stations is quite limited to his development and that contained in encyclopedias, and for this reason I should like to profit more extensively by Father MacVicar's scholarship. The greater portion of this letter will consist in citations from Father Lombard's article.

"From the Gospels we know that Jesus Christ walked from Pilate's praetorium to the place of execution on Calvary. The evangelists also state that Christ carried His cross at least part of the journey. Taken in this sense, the way of the cross goes back to the *via dolorosa* traversed by Christ on the first Good Friday. The way of the cross as we know it is, however, of almost modern origin. The traditions upon which it is based did not arise until the time of the crusades. The devotion itself cannot be traced back farther than the closing years of the fifteenth century. Not until the end of the seventeenth century did the stations come into general practice. . . .

"The scenes of Christ's sufferings and death have ever been highly esteemed by Christians. . . . Strong local traditions maintained that

the location of the different sites was accurate, that the various incidents in the passion took place at the very spots that were pointed out. Concerning the trustworthiness of these traditions there has been great dispute. Titus' destruction of the holy city, Hadrian's subsequent reconstruction and the radical changes these wrought in the terrain of Jerusalem have led some to doubt the reliability of many of the local traditions. Cornelius a Lapide, among others, maintains that these traditions cannot be fully trusted because even before A.D. 300 their continuity was broken many times by the forced withdrawal of the Christians from Jerusalem. However, many writers accept the local traditions as authentic. Father Thurston asserts that 'only an extreme scepticism will question the fact that the spots where Constantine built his churches were really the sites they claimed to be [p. 4].' Treating this question in his *Mémoire sur les instruments de la Passion de N.S.J.S.* (page 284), Charles Rohault de Fleury took what still seems the only warrantable position: 'In the presence of such contradictory opinions professed by eminent men, I can only record them, leaving to time and to other researches the care of giving a definitive solution on this important question.'

"Whatever the truth may be, it is a fact that the early Christians accepted these local traditions as authentic. . . . In the narration of her travels, Egeria (A.D. 380) enumerates the many sites then held sacred. Her stay in Jerusalem she describes in detail, mentioning all the holy places she visited and the ceremonies she witnessed. One notable feature of this description of the fourth century Jerusalem is that it makes no reference to a *via dolorosa* or to any incident not mentioned by the evangelists. Besides Lady Egeria, many other pilgrims wrote reports of what they had seen in the holy land. By comparing one with another it is possible to learn what places were honored at Jerusalem in those early times. In none of these many writings that are still extant is there any mention of a *via dolorosa*. Father Thurston comments: 'The pilgrims are so ready to give information when they possess it, that it seems barely credible that, when they are all silent, the *via crucis* can really have been honored by the pilgrims of that age [p. 21].' And here he is speaking of pilgrimages made even as late as the twelfth century. . . .

"The first indications of a *via crucis* at Jerusalem occur in reports made by pilgrims between 1290 and 1350. . . . To avoid trouble and to despatch the pilgrims from Jerusalem as quickly as possible, the Franciscans had to establish a definite and almost invariable program. . . . It was stated that the Blessed Virgin had spent her last days on earth in traversing again and again the route of her Son's passion. The way taken by the pilgrims was claimed as the exact counterpart of Mary's daily journey. . . . An interesting point about the route ascribed to Mary's journey is that it started from Calvary and retraced Christ's steps back to the Cenacle on Mount Zion. . . . In the course of time, certain spots along this route acquired a special prominence because more liberal indulgences were believed to be attached to them. Herein we find the beginnings of the *via dolorosa* as subsequently followed in Jerusalem. . . .

"The devotion experienced and the merits acquired by the pilgrims inspired others to

follow their example. . . . This same piety aroused in those who stayed at home a strong desire for something to replace the actual visit to the *via dolorosa* in Jerusalem. . . .

"The first pilgrim to note the use of 'station' in connection with the *via dolorosa* was William Wey, one of the original fellows of Eton College. Master Wey went to Palestine twice, in 1458 and 1462. In a report of his travels, he details the tour conducted by the Franciscans from Calvary to Olivet to Mount Zion. While he mentions many stopping-places, he applies the word stations only to those on the *via crucis*. Altogether, Wey describes twelve such sites. . . .

"In 1517 Sir Richard Torkington, a priest, wrote a description of his pilgrimage to Palestine. The chief feature of his narrative is that the various stations are given in reverse order. All subsequent pilgrims follow this arrangement when describing the tour through Jerusalem. Hence it seems certain that some time shortly before 1517 the Franciscans had changed the course of the tour, and that they now followed the direction traversed by Our Lord. Still the *via dolorosa* was not as yet a distinct object of veneration, though there were indications of such a trend. . . . It might be well to compare our present stations with those enumerated in the many pilgrim narratives written between 1300 and 1735. . . . 'It is noteworthy how completely our present arrangement of stations, which separates the holy women and Simon by Veronica and the second fall, contradicts all local tradition [Thurston, *ibid.*, p. 61].'

"In Europe the earliest imitations of the *via dolorosa* appeared late in the fifteenth century. The most famous then produced was that of Adam Krafft of Nuremberg. Martin Ketzell, a citizen of Nuremberg, made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem about 1468. On his return, he engaged Krafft to execute a series of eight carvings on the Passion. . . . Each carving portrays Christ falling under the cross or staggering again to His feet. For this reason these stations and many others on the same pattern were known as the 'seven falls.' Another well-known set of such stations was erected at Louvain by Peter Sterckx, who visited Jerusalem about 1505. Sterckx's Stations do not agree with Krafft's either in subject or in sequence. . . . Moreover, as will be seen shortly, these stations at Louvain greatly influenced the selection and arrangement of the fourteen we venerate today. . . .

"To aid the faithful in their devotion to the way of the cross, numerous meditations on the passion of Christ were published. . . . A later and much more important devotional work of this sort was the 'Spiritual Pilgrimage,' written by the Carmelite Jan Pascha and edited by Peter Calentyne at Louvain in 1563. As its title indicates, the purpose of the book is to present to its readers an imaginary pilgrimage to the holy land. . . . In Pascha's book there is evidence that his arrangement of the stations was greatly influenced by the stations erected by Peter Sterckx at Louvain, despite the fact that Pascha himself had made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

"In 1584 there appeared a work which was even more popularly received than Pascha's book. This was 'Jerusalem sicut Christi tempore floruit,' written by the Franciscan Adrichomius. . . . Adrichomius enumerates twelve stations on the way of the cross. His arrangement corresponds to that now used, but it

omits our thirteenth and fourteenth stations. For this reason some historians trace our stations to Adrichomius. However, it is evident that Adrichomius merely copied from the 'Spiritual Pilgrimage.' He cites Pascha, and although he mentions other authorities, it is clear that the only one he actually used was Pascha. First of all, the details of the way of the cross as given by both are identical; yet, they flatly contradict all other extant accounts. Moreover, the 'Spiritual Pilgrimage' had contained many minute measurements, most of which were incorrect. These Adrichomius incorporated bodily into his work, adding new blunders of his own. The fact that Adrichomius never visited the holy land seems to make it incontestable that he borrowed both his arrangement and his measurements from the 'Spiritual Pilgrimage.' Because Adrichomius' work was so popular and so widely diffused, his arrangement came to prevail over all others. So much so that the Franciscans had to modify the *via dolorosa* in Jerusalem so as to conform little by little to the piety of the faithful. Consequently, our present way of the cross comes to us not from Jerusalem but from Louvain, through Pascha and then through Adrichomius."

Father Thurston concludes his treatment of the way of the cross by saying: "The historical foundation of our present system of stations is quite of the slenderest [page 136]. The truth of such a statement is borne out by an analysis of the individual events we commemorate.

"Concerning the scenes depicted in the first and second stations, there has never been any controversy. Pilate's condemnation of Christ is recorded by both Saint Luke and Saint John. Though none of the evangelists describes Christ receiving the cross, Saint John states explicitly that 'bearing His own cross, He went forth.' In the third station we meet the first disputed incident. According to some writers, Christ, due to His weakened condition, collapsed under the heavy weight of the cross shortly after leaving the Praetorium. . . . None of the earliest traditions mentions any falls of Christ. The first traces of this belief are found in 1335, and these uphold only one fall — at the foot of Calvary. . . .

"The meeting of Jesus and Mary depicted in the fourth station is not recounted by any of the Evangelists. . . . However, the fact that Jesus paused to address a group of women from Jerusalem indicates that it was possible to draw near to Him. Hence, the meeting of Jesus and Mary on the way to Calvary must be considered at least as possible — indeed, as probable when we recall that on Calvary Mary drew near to her Son as soon as she could. . . .

"Three of the Gospels record the incident of Simon of Cyrene. . . . Veronica's wiping the face of Jesus, depicted in the sixth station, is based on an account found in the apocryphal 'Acts of Pilate.' This identifies Veronica as the woman cured from an issue of blood by touching the hem of Christ's garment, and states that she testified on behalf of Jesus at His trial. However, we know that this cure took place near Caesarea Philippi. . . . Other apocrypha mention Veronica and her possession of a cloth containing a portrait of our Lord. Different writers ascribe different origins to this cloth or *sudarium*. In the twelfth century, a *sudarium* (also called Veronica or Vernicle) venerated at Rome was said to have been brought to the Eternal City during the

time of Tiberius. . . . In the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries further details were added: Veronica, a leper, approaches the cross at the invitation of Mary. The latter takes Veronica's veil and wipes the face of Christ with it. On receiving the veil back with Christ's likeness imprinted on it, Veronica is healed. About 1335 there was mention of a place along the *via dolorosa* where Christ gave to a woman the Veronica (or *sudarium*) venerated at Rome. This supplanted all other variations of the story of Veronica. About 1400 this spot was identified as the home of Veronica, and after 1436 it was considered as one of the stations along the *via dolorosa*. . . .

"In the Gospel of Saint Luke we find a description of the scene represented in the eighth station, the meeting of Jesus with the daughters of Jerusalem. The earliest traditional accounts of this scene place it near the meeting with Simon. Peter Sterckx first changed this arrangement when he erected his stations at Louvain in 1505. In Jerusalem the older sequence prevailed until 1713. According to the early traditions, Christ spoke to the women as soon as He was relieved of the weight of the cross and was in consequence able to raise His head.

"That the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth stations commemorate actual happenings is evident from the Gospel narrative. These incidents were made prominent as separate stations by Jan Pascha. He was also the first to classify the descent from the cross and the burial as stations. Although these scenes had aroused the devotion of the early Christians and were venerated in Jerusalem, they were not included in any list of stations before Pascha's 'Spiritual Pilgrimage' was published. All the evangelists refer to the burial of Jesus. While none of them mention Mary's receiving into her arms the body of her Son, Christian writers have ever treated with compassion that scene known as the *pietà*."

"Having treated of the development of the stations and the historicity of the scenes they portray, there remains now the necessity of saying something about the *via dolorosa* venerated in Jerusalem. Since the crusades, the Franciscans have had custody of the many shrines in Jerusalem. Many friars, all official custodians or long residents, have described the sites venerated in the holy city. Down to the end of the seventeenth century, such accounts never varied in any important particular. These descriptions, up to this same time, mention no falls and put the meetings with Simon and the holy women of Jerusalem close together. The course of the *via dolorosa*, as they described it, was not straight but zig-zagged sharply in the middle. The arrangement of Jan Pascha's stations flatly contradicted these local traditions. Nevertheless, in the course of years the Carmelite's system was adopted even by the Franciscans in the holy city. The reason for this is not hard to discover. Adrichomius' work, which embodied the ideas and dates of Pascha, was extremely popular in Europe. . . . Eventually the system of Adrichomius was somehow made to fit in with the local traditions, and by 1818 the process was completed. Hence, the stations in Jerusalem received their present arrangement during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. . . .

"There now arises the question: 'Is the *via dolorosa* authentic? Does it actually retrace the path trodden by Christ?'. . . . The profound and successive transformations in the topogra-

phy of Jerusalem over the space of 2000 years render almost impossible an exact discovery of the path traversed by Christ and reddened by His blood. In spots as much as fifty feet of soil separate the ancient and modern roadbeds. Hence the present *via dolorosa* is but an approximation of the route followed on that first Good Friday. However, it is a fairly reliable approximation, for its beginning, end, and general direction may be considered as historically certain. The research work of Fathers Vincent and Abel, Dominicans, has established almost beyond all doubt that the praetorium, where Pilate condemned Christ to death, was situated in the Fortress Antonia. Likewise, the traditional sites of Calvary and the tomb of Christ are incontestable. Still, these three are the only fixed points; all the rest are conjectural. Any more accurate determination of Christ's course must be left to future historians and archeologists. Their task will be a long and difficult one, for a maze of modern buildings greatly impedes research work."

WE MAY readily see from this historical treatment of the stations of the cross how much religious art has affected truth and piety in the devotions concerning the passion of Christ. For the stations and the *pietà* are not inconsiderably represented in our churches, and the former have been highly indulged.

The word "station" was used in several senses in the early and medieval Church. The latin term, "static" or "watch" was originally attached to the vigils which were kept at the tombs of the early martyrs, but later it came to be applied to any liturgical gathering, especially when preceded by a procession. The terminus or goal of the procession was called the "statio": hence the station churches in Rome. Gradually, any halting-place during a procession or any site which called for special veneration was called a station. This was the meaning which was attached to the term during the fourteenth century. As we saw above, Master Wey first noted the use of "station" as applicable to the stopping-place along the *via crucis* during the fifteenth century.

It is not my intent in this letter to suggest anything controversial or revolutionary. In the spirit of the *Jerusalem Transportata* mentioned by Father MacVicar, however, there is an idea which comes to mind which may be presented for what it is worth. The stations of the cross as they exist today, stemming from Pascha, Adrichomius and Vitale, are not all actual *sites* or stopping-off places. For example, the tenth to the thirteenth stations, inclusively, take place at Golgotha or Calvary, and the thirteenth and fourteenth stations are not really

part of the *via dolorosa*. These stations inspire meditation upon several actions which took place in but two places. Then, too, our present-day stations follow a tradition dating only from the early sixteenth century which is in reverse order to the centuries-old journey of Mary which started at Calvary and returned to the Cenacle. Several stations are also of dubious historical origin, and others are inverted according to scriptural and traditional order. Would it be indiscreet, then, to suggest the possibility of a new formulation of fourteen stations (realizing of course that the number of stations was quite varied throughout history)? They could be enumerated as follows:

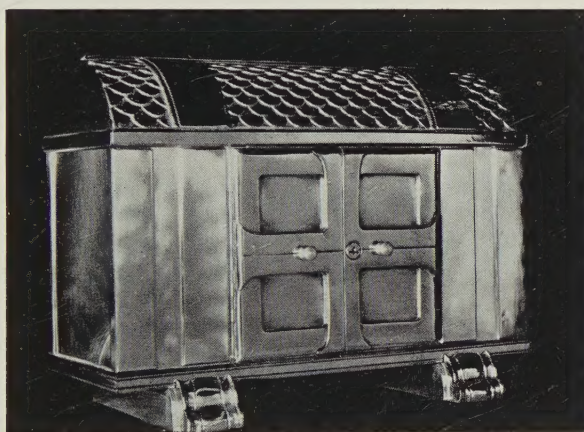
- I. Jesus offers His first Mass and ordains His apostles in the Cenacle.
- II. Jesus suffers His agony in the garden of Gethsemane.
- III. Jesus is scourged at the pillar.
- IV. Jesus is crowned with thorns.
- V. Jesus is condemned to death.
- VI. Jesus receives the cross upon His shoulders.
- VII. Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry the cross.
- VIII. Jesus consoles the women of Jerusalem, and probably His mother.
- IX. Jesus is stripped of His garments.
- X. Jesus is nailed to the cross.
- XI. Jesus dies on the cross.
- XII. Jesus is taken down from the cross, and probably rests on the bosom of His mother.
- XIII. Jesus is laid in the tomb.
- XIV. Jesus rises triumphant from the tomb.

This manner of ordering the stations is consonant with scripture and the historical *via crucis* of Christ as well as the current arrangement of the mysteries of the rosary, and it includes the authenticated shrines at Jerusalem. It also comprises the entirety of the mysteries of Holy Week, including the traditional view of the Fathers of the Church of the crucified Christ as glorious victor over sin and death as well as the medieval appreciation for the God who "emptied Himself," assumed our humanity and became obedient even unto the tragic death on the cross. As I noted above, this suggestion is offered for what it is worth. In the light of the chequered history of the stations, there is scarcely any fear of tampering with tradition. It does, however, seem to me to be more sound as a basis for the devotion of the faithful, and more in accord with the spirit of the new *ordo* for the liturgy of Holy Week. May it be confided to the scholarship and love of truth of the sons of Saint Francis.

Yours truly,
(Rev.) EDWARD J. SUTFIN

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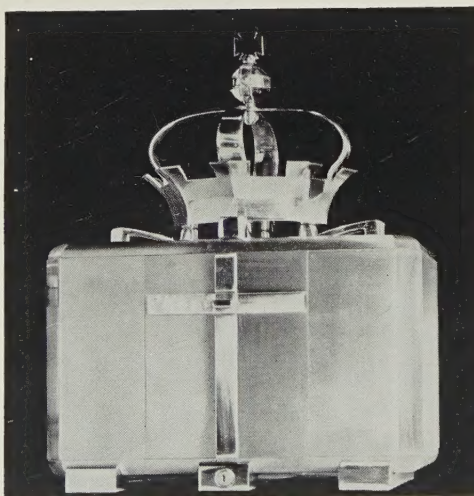


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Plate 1 Saint Stephen, by Jean Fouquet (1490). Left wing of the diptych of Melun, in Deutsches Museum. A splendid example showing how an appareled amice serves as a decorative completion to the vestment. (page 94 of *L'Ouvroir Liturgique, nouvelle série*)





Plate 2 Procession of the Emperor Justinian, in Saint Vitale, Ravenna, sixth century. The simplicity and ampleness of the chasuble worn by Pope Maximian is characteristic of the majority of ancient forms. The colored cloth is without any design. Note how the right arm is liberated for use by the simple expedient of throwing the right side of the chasuble up over the shoulder.

Plate 3 Ivory Missal covers, Frankfurt-am-Main, ninth century. This is probably the first portrayal in art of the actual celebration of the Mass. Previous to this time the Mass and the Eucharist were expressed only in symbols. Early works portray clerics vested in chasubles, but only in static positions.



Plate 4 Chasubles of the cathedral of Chartres, thirteenth century. At the peak of the gothic period, the chasuble remains utterly simple. The front orphrey on the bishop's vestment and the general usage of amice apparels are typical of the period; beyond this, the form and decoration of the chasuble is retained as in pre-Carolingian times.

